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MISS HENDERSON.

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## A T R A N D O M.

BY L. F. AUSTIN.

"We'll e'en to 't like French falconers, fly at anything we see."

Do the young ideas keep diaries nowadays? I remember that, at a callow age, I kept a diary, in which were registered good resolutions for the New Year, and a variety of matters mostly pertaining to an affair of the heart that did not prosper. An empty place in a family pew inspired gloomy meditations, interspersed with comments on the sermon, preached by the schoolmaster heretofore mentioned in this page. From the highway to school I could see, at a considerable distance, the dwelling of the beloved; and, in the belief that She was signalling to me, I often waved a handkerchief, to the derisive wonder of the passers-by. Subsequently, I learned that the supposed signal was nothing but the prosaic operation of window-cleaning, a stroke of irony that plunged the diary into gall. Musings when I was perched on sand-hills, in the hope that She would presently take a walk that way, were set down copiously in prose and verse; also the awful moment when She said, with freezing disdain, that, if I persisted in hanging about, She would speak to her papa. I had a vague notion that speaking to papa was a man's office; moreover, papa was a benevolent person, who had stood my friend when a malignant conspiracy sought to eject me from the church choir on the pretext that my voice was breaking. Stay; was a breaking voice a symptom of manhood? Was there any justification for speaking to papa in the circumstance that my worldly possessions had been reduced by foul play at marbles? These and other perplexing questions were discussed in the diary till it struck me that they were not safe from the prying eyes of parents and guardians. I sealed up the most intimate details with such a profusion of red wax that suspicion must have been excited, for I found that the precious volume had been carried off by the parents and guardians to the schoolmaster, with whom I was then in ill odour, to convince him, out of my tributes to his pulpit eloquence, that I was a loyal adherent of Church and State.

After that disclosure, my New Year resolutions and other weighty business remained upon the tablets of the brain. But, having come into possession of a nice fresh diary, with a leather cover, cool and pleasant to the touch, one of those marvels of calendar accuracy from which you learn at a glance when "black-cock shooting begins," I am tempted to commit to paper certain pledges for New Year's Day. There is a danger in this, no doubt; if you keep your resolves in a fluid state in your head, all may go well with them; but the act of protesting in black and white has a relish of mockery in it. Prosper Mérimée, in one of his delightful letters to the unknown lady of his regard, remarks that when she assured him, with precise circumstance, of her engagement to another, he laughed with all the confidence of happiness. The mere setting down of this troth convinced him that it was written in air. So I have a suspicion that the simple intrusion of a pen within the virgin leaves of my charming new diary is like an invocation of the spirit that denies. If you have no such misgiving, you will write these momentous resolutions with a light heart. Number One: To suffer Bores gladly. I don't think the Bore, especially the richly endowed specimen who haunts the club, has received anything like justice. What a noble inspiration is his when he sits down at your writing-table to tell, with interminable digressions, the story you have heard three nights a week for several months! The beauty of this experience is that it makes a draft upon your charity, which may have no other calls. You can escape the subscription-list; you can pass the collecting-box in the street with the ostensible plea of violent hurry; but when the Bore, bland and smiling, sits down in the trenches and opens fire, you must stand manfully on your bastions to be shot at. My particular Bore never scruples to remark, as he charges his breech-loader with a whisky-and-soda, "Ah, I see you are scribbling your rambling stuff for the papers. I can give you an awfully good story. You'll have the exclusive use of it, you know; but you mustn't mention my name." With this refreshing candour, and with an eye twinkling confidentially over the rim of a tumbler, he prefaces the trebly thrice-told tale; and when I feel no temptation to gaze fixedly at the clock, I know I am in a state of grace.

Number Two: To be always deferential to the Rudest Woman of your acquaintance. This resolution is, in a sense, the correlative of the first, for the lady is always *distracte* when you try to entertain her at dinner with your sparkling gossip. Her eyes wander round the table and rest upon another man; then she confides a sigh to her *serviette* by way of protest against the fate which allotted her to you instead of to him. In this trying position you must tell your best anecdote without abbreviation, as if you had the most attentive auditor in the world. When you meet her again, and vainly hazard a call upon

her remembrance, you must take her apology that "one meets so many people in the course of a season" as an opportunity to tell your best story again, with some artistic variations. She may turn her back during this recital, and engage in loud conversation with somebody else; but that must not deter you from treating her with elaborate politeness on the next occasion. The Rudest Woman is the fiery furnace of society; and if you can pass through this ordeal with unbroken fortitude, you may give yourself the airs of Abednego. Number Three: To listen intently to the Youngest Man who boasts that he has never read anything. This trial is severe, because the Youngest Man is perfectly sincere. He does not pose as a monument of ignorance, but confesses, with the fluency of simple enjoyment, that the works of distinguished writers are quite unknown to him. After a while, you cease to suggest this or that author for his edification; you even blush when you chance to mention a book by inadvertence; and you begin to feel a melancholy satisfaction in the thought that, as all writers are superfluous, a pinnacle of fame is no great matter.

Number Four is a natural sequel of its predecessor. Do not be seduced into any statement as to the "Books Which Have Influenced Me." If you are rash enough to yield to this temptation, you expose yourself to the disdain of readers who hold the Books which have moulded you in the lightest esteem. For instance, if I were to admit, even in the most guarded way, that the great literary influence of my life was "Boodle's American Library," what credit would remain to me? Yet it was Boodle who opened my boyhood to the subtle, if academic, charm of the North American Indian. When the flower of innocence unclosed its petals to the dews of literature, Boodle, so to speak, dropped a tomahawk into them. Does any British lad ever read about Tecumseh now? Does he know Simon Gerty, the renegade with red hair, who helped the Indians to massacre settlers on the Ohio River? When I crossed the Ohio in a train one day, I could see Simon, with the poll of Judas, luring the flat-boats, laden with women and children, to the treacherous shoals, while the dreadful whoop of the Indians rang through the shuddering air. Then there was Gustave Aimard, who wrote tales of the Comanches, and of Mexican "greasers," disreputable persons who said "Caramba" and "Caracas" when they wished to be profane. Caracas, I observe, is the capital of Venezuela. Well, were I to confess my debt to Boodle and Aimard, twin-moulders of destiny, how could I hold up my head before the Youngest Man?

But there is a more important Library than Boodle's; it holds the volumes of our Old Years, and to its shelves will be added in due season the new volume which we are all beginning to-day. How readily young and old close the tome that is just finished, and turn to the new-comer with unabated expectation! Here is the secret of the world's optimism. We are like Sydney Smith's nag, which carried him on his parochial rounds with unflagging zest because he had adjusted a tray of corn just in front of the animal's nose. Our corn is always in the future, and we keep up the gallop against time to the end of our tether. But the simile is too equine; let me return to the books, and, in my capacity as one of the librarians, sing the Ballad of Turning New Leaves—

*Here goes one more book to the Shelf,  
Where ranges the spirited row  
Of annals of plodding and pelf  
In years that are gone with their snow.  
Ah! records that ruthlessly show  
How little ambition achieves;  
Yet who is too frigid to know  
The passion of turning new leaves?*

*We reckon not of greetings grown cold,  
Of lips whose fond murmur is sped;  
We reckon not of rust and of mould  
Which lie on the faith that is dead.  
The tears that are shed, they are shed;  
Regrets are but pestilent thieves—  
We yearn for the year that's unsaid,  
And eagerly turn the new leaves.*

*These pages, till *Finis* be writ,  
Our souls shall sustain and allure;  
And should they prove false as they flit,  
Why, then, their successors are sure!  
This spell, while the planets endure,  
To fickle humanity cleaves—  
Of ledgers and billets d'amour  
There's never a lack of new leaves!*

*So toast the new volume, dear friend:  
No sorrows without their reprieves,  
The largesse of kindness to spend,  
And Hope ever turning new leaves!*





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- AT THE SHAFTESBURY THEATRE.

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## "A WOMAN'S REASON," AT THE SHAFTESBURY.

They are wrong who, the wish being father to the thought, pretend that the realistic school of drama, under which they class Ibsen, the late Pinero plays, &c., is dead; but, undoubtedly, there is a great reaction. Twelve months ago, Messrs. Brookfield and Philips would not have marred such an able work as "A Woman's Reason" by an absolutely contemptible "happy-ever-after" ending. That Nina should have become remorseful after finding her experiment in illicit love a failure is conceivable; that mere absence from her husband (with whom she had lived for seven years in scornful distaste), even aided by horror of Captain Crozier, should have caused Mrs. D'Acosta to grow passionately in love with Stephen, is absurd.

It is pleasant to turn to the other aspect of the drama, and speak of the brilliance of its satirical comedy. Messrs. Brookfield and Philips have got away from "Frou Frou" chiefly by the difference of atmosphere between the pieces. Nina is perhaps Frou Frou—without, however, the charm and suggestion of capacity for good; one could almost accept a reunion of Gilberte with her husband; the two sisters' quarrel is probably borrowed; yet the vivid, interesting, scathing sketch of the spendthrift lord, of the "man-of-the-world" lover, and of the still more "man-of-the-world" parson, are the authors' creation. The Rev. Cosmo Pretious is peculiarly Mr. Philips's property, since he is obviously a descendant of the Rev. Augustus St. Aubyn, of "The Dean's Daughter."

One might exhaust the praise-words of the dictionary in speaking of the performance. From little Master Stewart Dawson, a marvellous child-actor, to Mrs. Beerbohm Tree, brilliant as the heroine, everything is good. Mr. Coghlan's lamentable excursions into romantic drama have not marred his style, and his Crozier was admirable. Mr. Lewis Waller, though rigidly eschewing efforts at racial colour, acted admirably, and exactly the same may be said of Miss Florence West. Mr. Brookfield, as author, would have found himself as actor exactly to his taste; and Mr. Henry Kemble's Pretious was a noteworthy piece of pure comedy.

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## THE PANTOMIMES.

## REHEARSING FROM HOUR TO HOUR.

Noon, Christmas Eve.—Drury Lane littered with paper. Traffic stops while men run rolls of scenery, looking like main-masts of ships, through side-door into the theatre. Pale scene-shifters, more or less grimy, standing about. "At what hour does the rehearsal begin?" I ask. Nobody seems to know. I enter the stage-door. Notice-board announces the following—"Calls, Tuesday: Ballet Gents, Chorus Girls, Children at seven sharp. For Comic Business." I pass down dark passage, and ascend to the stage. Curtain half-raised, showing T-light of flaming gas-jets. Side of a house lying on the boards. Carpenters nailing on portico against time. Back of stage crowded with huge gilt candelabra in wooden crates, men putting finishing touches of gilding to them. In alcove electricians fixing lights to Cinderella's coach. Three pantomime children—short frocks, black stockings, with holes in them—gaze admiringly at everything in turn. Fifteen messenger-boys drawn up in line at "O. P." side. Auditorium empty. Seats covered in holland. Feeble flicker of daylight from windows above gallery. Energetic woman in apron, laden with gold dresses, rushes past me. "When is the rehearsal?" I ask. "Two o'clock," she gasps, and disappears.

Two o'clock.—Curtain down. Large easy-chair and writing-table against wall at "prompt" side of stage. Man removes T-light. Sprinkling of people in stalls, dress-circle, and boxes. Artists sharpen pencils. More people arrive. Mr. Glover, conductor of band, takes his seat, hat on head and coat-collar turned up. Band races through various songs, spurred and cajoled to perfection by conductor, who has soon shouted himself hoarse—"All right, next number! Quiet, brass! Now, strings only. There, that'll bring her on. Now try what we call the coda." Time passes. It is three o'clock. Band hammers away to the accompaniment of blows from mallets somewhere at back of pit. At 3.15 enter Sir Augustus Harris. Suppressed applause. Speaks to conductor. Strange noises from behind the curtain. Angry cries for "Rumford! Where's Rumford?" Band stops playing. Youth in the stalls leans over the orchestra, and says "What ho!" to first violin. Shakes hands with the end of first violin's bow. Deep voice on stage shouts "Clear!" Curtain rises on the Toy Ballet.

3.30.—Stage ablaze with toys six feet and more high, also dolls, ostriches, and fairies. Enter railway-train. Among the toys run two black coats, who beg, implore, entreat, and command eight-day clocks, turkeys, dolls' houses, and Aunt Sallies, to behave as such. Mr. Herbert Campbell and Mr. Dan Leno, in short jackets and brown boots, lean against a bee-hive, gazing sadly at the scene. Suddenly, Sir Augustus throws up his hands to the painted heavens. "It won't do!" he cries; "go back!" Down comes curtain. Wait of ten minutes. All begins over again. Goes better. Smile of satisfaction passes over face of Sir Augustus. He takes a seat in stalls. Toys dance themselves off. Scene changes to "The Baron's Kitchen." The wall opposite the fire where Cinderella sits comes on with a hop, skip, and a jump, beating the other walls by at least ten seconds. "Put it all back!" shouts Sir Augustus. Frightened men rush on stage. Scene is put back. Chaos follows; then order is evolved from it. Cinderella is discovered, her cat by her side, but, as the cat's dress is not ready, it is a little boy who is curled up at her feet. She speaks, little boy purrs. Sir Augustus jumps to his feet. "What's that doing there?" he shouts. We crane our heads forward. One of the toys, a life-sized Mrs. Chant, is leaning against the kitchen wall. Stage-manager runs off with her tucked under his arm. Scene proceeds.

Four o'clock.—Mr. Herbert Campbell and Mr. Dan Leno rehearse topical duet—or rather, they speak the words confidentially to the band. Sir Augustus seats himself in arm-chair. Smiles benignantly. The Elder Sisters and Brothers Griffiths appear. Small audience laughs. Sir Augustus vacates chair. Reappears in royal box. We forget that the performance is a mere rehearsal, when, in the midst of a love duet between an Elder Sister and a Brother Griffiths, a piece of the Prince's Palace coyly prepares to descend upon their heads. Sir Augustus and other black coats rush upon the stage. They all shake their fists angrily at the ceiling, and cry, "Where's Wood? Wood, are you there? What the —? where the —? Where's Wood? Small, thin voice attempts to explain. Piece of Prince's Palace retires into obscurity.

Five o'clock.—Strings of girls dressed as fairies, sprites, pages, &c., seat themselves in stalls and dress circle. Others peep ecstatically from boxes. Enter six beautiful ladies, each with a speaking part of two lines. They are very haughty, and not quite word-perfect. Sir Augustus acts each part in turn, and then says, with a horrible kind of sweetness—"Now run away, and do it all over again by your pretty selves, and if you can't do it better we'll —." Scene changes to a wood, disclosing carpenter at back nailing saplings to the landscape. Fairy enters nonchalantly in fur mantle and brown boots. "My dear, we've been waiting for you a quarter of an hour," says the Great Man. Just then real waiter appears on stage with something real to drink in a real tumbler. Huntsmen and dogs appear at back. "Where's the fox?" screams the manager. Little boy in knickerbocker suit runs on. Fox's dress not quite ready yet. Snow begins to fall timidly. "More! more!" shouts Sir Augustus. "Why don't those snow boxes go?" Snow at once becomes thicker. Further calls for Wood. "Where's Wood? That you, Wood?" Then, put—put a red light on the back cloth.

Six o'clock.—Pleasant odour of soup from back of pit. Mr. D'Auban appears on stage. Suggests steps to various performers. Trouble with blackbeetles. Cries of "Put the limelight on the blackbeetles!" Cinderella sings. "Take that chair, my child. Turn towards the fire.

That's it." Good Fairy strolls down stage. Various vegetables proceed to turn into horses, coachmen, and coach. Voice of Sir Augustus from stalls, to Good Fairy, "You've said nothing about the pumpkin." Good Fairy: "It's not mentioned in the text." Sir Augustus: "Wh-a-a-t? Where's Mr. Sturgess?" Author's head leans over dress-circle explaining that the reference to the pumpkin is on the first page of the Good Fairy's scrip. Rehearsal proceeds.

Seven o'clock.—Ballet enters in various costumes. Violent gesticulatory argument between Sir Augustus and ballet-master. Enter Cinderella's coach, and many ponies size of St. Bernard dogs. One of the ponies escapes. Shies at footlights. Sir Augustus seizes bridle. Shows pony that the light is harmless. No cause for fear. Situation saved. Scene gone over again. Frantic appeals to Wood. Curtain.

Eight o'clock.—More sprites and fairies appear in stalls. Stage occupied by principals. They keep their hands in pockets, and speak in undertones. I go out for refreshment. Make my way through iron door which leads to "behind the scenes." Not room to move. Ponies and scene-shifters everywhere. Return in quarter of an hour. Principals still on stage, talking confidentially. Other performers scattered about the house. Man appears at door of stalls, shouting hoarsely, "Everybody on stage, please!" Exodus.

Nine o'clock.—Actors and audience begin to show signs of fatigue. Ball-room scene. Auditorium in darkness. Carpenters at back of stage fastening columns to buildings. Many arguments with ladies of the ballet. Nobody speaks to Wood.

Ten o'clock.—More signs of fatigue. Three little page-girls, not yet in their teens, seat themselves in the stalls, and audibly criticise the stage-management. Sir Augustus, from a private box: "Ladies of the ballet, will you kindly keep back, because we can't see through you?" Beginning of the transformation scene.

Eleven o'clock.—Sir Augustus Harris looks anxiously at his watch. Transformation scene proceeds. Angels are told not to clutch the strings of their harps as if they were wringing clothes. Tired audience grows enthusiastic. In the midst of a blaze of splendour four fairies appear holding scrolls before them with lovers' knots and hearts made of electric lights. Suddenly they throw hearts and lovers' knots to the ground. Sensation! Electrician rushes on the stage and persuades the fairies that they did not really receive an electric shock. It was mere fancy.

Half-past Eleven.—Last blaze has blazed, and last word has been spoken. Sir Augustus Harris rises from the stalls. "Perhaps some of you ladies are hungry?" Loud cries of "Yes! yes!" Well, those who are not too hungry will find supper prepared." Audience troops toward the stage-door. Stage is like Trafalgar Square on a demonstration day. My passage stopped by man persuading horse not to lick the gilt off Cinderella's coach. Creep beneath the animal. Reach door. Turn round for one more look. Observe a pair of legs dangling high up in the flies. They are Wood's. I have seen him! I am content! Go home.

L. H.

## DRURY LANE AND THE LYCEUM.

To sit through nearly eight hours of pantomime in one day is a notable proof of the critic's powers of endurance, and it is not to be expected that his recollections of "Cinderella" and "Robinson Crusoe" will be very nicely accurate. Indeed, as with Buttercup and the babies, there is some danger of mixing them up, and saying things of the Lyceum that are due to Drury Lane. However, since there is little save praise to be awarded, the result even of a mistake will not be very serious. Speaking of the two, one notices that Mr. Oscar Barrett has abandoned his excellent idea of having an interval, and that Sir Augustus Harris has taken it up. The wild rush of men during the short—the too short—pause at the Lane for smoke and chance of movement was quite touching.

Of the memories of Boxing Day, the most vivid to me is a dainty little figure in bodice and skirt of mouse-grey, almost ever in graceful movement. This was Miss Isa Bowman. It is a tremendous ordeal for a girl still glad in her teens, and with a good margin, to find herself, at three days' notice and rehearsal, as central figure of a Drury Lane pantomime, and to feel that there was Sir Augustus in the boxes, Sir Augustus in the stalls, Sir Augustus in the dress-circle—and possibly in pit, gallery, and other places, for I only speak of my own knowledge—taking notes. No wonder that eagerness and nervousness somewhat affected the pretty girl, chiefly in her voice—a very pleasant contralto, not exactly apt for some passages of her music. Her acting showed intelligence—there was little scope. It was the dancing that entranced me. Since we all swore by Miss Kate Vaughan, no dancer has caught her style so perfectly as Miss Isa; that her technique is perfect I do not say, but she has the exquisite, fluent grace, the harmony of head, hands, arms, feet, and legs that mark the great dancer. If she will but bear in mind that the dancer must practise as incessantly as the violinist, Miss Bowman should soon have a unique position among our dancers.

Turning for pleasant memories to the Lyceum, there was a delightful child-fairy, Miss Geraldine Somerset, who showed an astounding gift for pantomime. With her may be set Miss Grace Lane, the very pretty Polly Hopkins. Miss Lane has something of the face and voice of Miss Ellis Jeffreys, and a very pleasant contralto voice, which she uses well. In Middle. Zanfretta, Mr. Oscar Barrett had the most notable ballet-dancer. Her Indian dance was charming in voluptuous grace, while she has an animation of countenance fascinating after the wooden-doll smirk of the ordinary *prima donna assoluta*.

In the question of ballet, there is little to choose between the rival houses. At the Lyceum there is but one, yet so splendid and beautiful



in the costumes designed by Wilhelm and manœuvres contrived by Madame Katti Lanner that it holds its own against the Lane, despite the pretty forest dance and gorgeous ball-room. Indeed, there is no real victory in the contest, though to the many Sir Augustus will seem to bear the palm.

When it becomes a question of laughter, there is no comparison. Mr. Victor Stevens is very funny as Mrs. Crusoe, and Mr. Charles Lauri, for once a man, makes Friday comic in his antics and interesting in pantomime. However, Mr. Dan Leno, aided by Mr. Herbert Campbell, to say nothing of the Griffiths Brothers, are more than counterweight. Really, Dan—I apologise for the irresistible familiarity—is vastly comic as the famously infamous stepmother imagined by the Comtesse d'Aulnoy, and perfected by Sir Augustus and Messrs. Cecil Raleigh and Sturgess. Of the common offence of man in woman's clothing he has nothing; of the broad, vigorous grotesque he has everything, and it is as easy to laugh at him as to swear at a tax-collector. There was a little too much of the black-marked face business in him; save as to that, all is praise. Mr. Herbert Campbell, though earning less laughter in the aggregate, made the hit of the evening with his song, "In the Strand," which caused uproarious applause.

I had expected that, musically, the Lyceum would be the stronger; but, to my surprise, found I was wrong. Sir Augustus, with the aid of Mr. J. M. Glover, has got together a more remarkable collection of the latest popular airs than Mr. Barrett, and they have been handled with much skill, while Mr. Glover has written some charming dance-music, and his orchestra was so handled as to do work of surprising nicety. Mr. Barrett does, indeed, deserve praise for the quality of his choice; but there is a lack of movement in many of the numbers, and more rehearsals were needed. At the Lane almost all went as if on a fiftieth night.

Among the many people who did excellent work at the Lane were Mdlle. Marguerite Cornille, a pretty foreigner, with much of the *chic* of a Nesville and energy of a Nina Martino; Miss Ada Blanche, an admirable Prince Charming; Miss Alexandra Dagnar, who sang well; and the little Valli Vallis; while at the other house Miss Alice Brookes, a lively Robinson, with wonderful dancing power, handsome Miss Susie Vaughan, and the elastic Mr. Fred Storey, are to be named.

Charming is the scenery at Sir Henry Irving's theatre, but it has no scene so beautiful as the forest picture by Mr. Schweitzer at Drury Lane, and necessarily the electric auto-motor car of Cinderella puts all else in the shade. It is to be regretted that a huge, hideous wheel of revolving electric lights was used to dim the splendour of the car. The ball-room scene was superb, though I grew tired of the Diana-looped skirts, displaying one leg, that were used too lavishly. I do not feel called upon to pass judgment on the relative merits of the two entertainments. I sat out four-fifths of each with pleasure, and it may be mere personal bias that made me prefer the Lane. The best thing to do is to go to both and form your own judgment.

MONOCLE.

### "THE LATE MR. CASTELLO," AT THE COMEDY.

Mr. Comyns Carr has made a curious experiment in using the company that worked brilliantly in the cruel comedy, "The Benefit of the Doubt," for his new production, Mr. Sydney Grundy's broad farce, "The Late Mr. Castello." Unfortunately, the experiment is not quite successful: the ladies are all right, and no change in them could be made without loss, nor could anyone be a better Sir Pinto than Mr. Cyril Maude. However, during the evening one kept sighing as paraphrase, "Oh for one hour (or rather, two) of Wyndham!"

I do not mean to say that the play is dull; on the contrary, many scenes are very funny, but at times it dragged painfully. It is frankly called a farce, and, so far as scheme is concerned, is a very old-fashioned one; but Mr. Grundy has written with an immense amount of wit, and also great cleverness in some of the character-drawing. If we had been allowed to look upon Trefusis and Mrs. Castello as fantastic creatures, and not as mere failures at representing human beings, all would have been well. Unfortunately Trefusis marred Miss Emery's efforts, since she was forced to play to him—just as in one scene he made poor Mr. Cyril Maude appear almost amateurish.

Before going to the Comedy, you must study the Stock Exchange if you wish to understand the parts brilliantly acted by Miss Esmé Beringer and somewhat heavily by Mr. J. G. Grahame. I cannot remember any case in which the jargon of a profession has been used so lavishly, and fear that to many it will be, as Sir Pinto's Latin to Mrs. Bickerdyke, all Greek. After laughing a good deal at a piece, it seems somewhat ungracious to come away and grumble because one has not laughed more; so I feel bound to say that the first act, with its picture of the girl who, posing as an inconsolable widow, lays herself out to catch the heart of every man she meets, is really a brilliant piece of work; one laughed heartily, even though wondering when the real intrigue would begin, for the "practical joke" on which the piece is based does not begin till half-way through the second act. Miss Leclercq, as the mother anxious to get for herself Sir Pinto, her daughter's sweetheart, was very amusing, and acted admirably. Though borne down at times, Miss Emery played with irresistible skill as the lively widow, caught very easily, despite her supposed finesse, in the Captain's trap; it was a pity that her part could not have been amplified. At times the Sir Pinto promised to be one of the finest of Mr. Maude's studies of fatuous old men, but even the actor's remarkable skill could not conceal the fact that the humour of the part is rather shallow.

MONOCLE.

### AN INTERNATIONAL REVIEW AND ITS EDITOR.

Most people have heard by this time of an interesting literary venture—*Cosmopolis*, the new international review—which starts with the new year. The review is founded and edited by Mr. Fernand Ortmans, and the publication of it here—London, so to speak, being its headquarters—will be in the hands of Mr. T. Fisher Unwin.

The other day (writes a *Sketch* interviewer) I called upon Mr. Ortmans at Mr. Fisher Unwin's office, and had a talk with him about *Cosmopolis*.

"Why *Cosmopolis*?" I asked. "What is the idea of the review?"

"It is meant," he replied, "to occupy a field which is now empty, but which is, nevertheless, I think, a great and, moreover, an ever-growing field. The notion is to supply a review which shall enable different peoples and different nations 'to see ourselves as others see us.' The plan is to present English-speaking and Continental readers with a trilingual review of English, French, and German text. We shall

appeal more particularly to those—a great number in every country now—whose knowledge of languages enables them to follow intimately the literary, political, social, artistic, and general life of foreign nations—and to follow these things, as you understand me, in the mother-tongues of the several countries."

"In a word, *Cosmopolis* will bring the writers and readers of one country into direct contact with those who write and read in another?"

"Quite so. The review is almost a necessary result of the spread of the knowledge of modern languages, and the strange thing is that something on the same lines has not been given to the public before now. Moreover, the magazine should be very interesting to teachers and students of foreign languages, because it will form, from month to month, what I may call an up-to-date text-book. Instead of a series of dry readings referring to people and events of the past, you will have articles relating to the present, by living writers of the great nations."

"A republic of letters—in how many sheets, and at what price?"

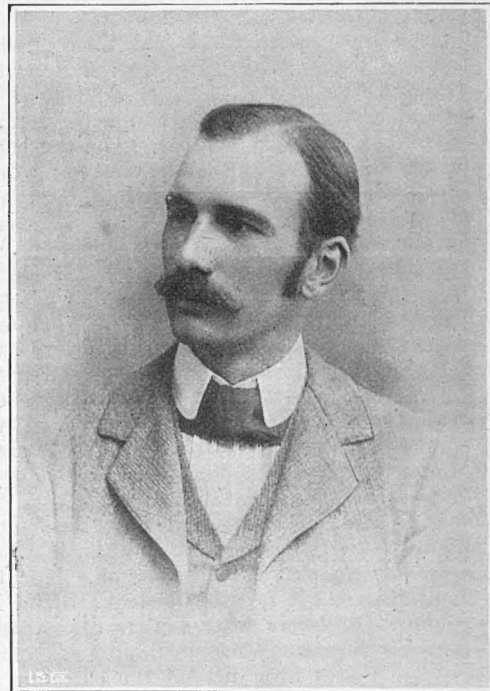
"We shall give three hundred pages of text—the first number is really larger—equally divided between English, French, and German. The price is half-a-crown, or the same as the leading English reviews, only the man who understands one language besides his own will have two hundred pages of original reading. If he knows two foreign languages, he will have three hundred pages; and always, mind you, the articles stand for the writers directly and for their languages. No translations, no illustrations, unless, indeed, it might be a map to elucidate the text."

"If such a magazine means anything, it surely means that the nations will be drawn closer together—at least, that knowledge being mixed in a single crucible, they will get to know each other better and better?"

"Well, we hope so; indeed, we count upon that as an inevitable influence. An outstanding feature of the review will be a carefully prepared scheme of chronicles, or critical summaries of literature, foreign politics, and the drama. That is to say, some recognised authority in England, France, and Germany will discuss in *Cosmopolis* foreign politics, literature, and the drama. Mr. Andrew Lang is to write on current English literature, Mr. Henry Norman on the foreign politics of the world seen through English spectacles, and Mr. A. B. Walkley on the best English plays. We shall have a series of articles in which politics are discussed from the outsider's point of view—an Englishman, for instance, on a French question. And there is to be a second series, in which the letters, arts, and politics of nations whose languages are not directly represented will be carefully portrayed and reviewed by writers of special authority. Then, and in general, *Cosmopolis* will every month have articles on various questions of literature, politics, art, and science. First, and above all else, we are a literary review, but our staff of contributors all round will be quite remarkably strong."

"And, no doubt, you will include fiction?"

"Oh, certainly! Stevenson's unfinished tale, 'Weir of Hermiston,' is appearing in the first three numbers. Those who have read the fragment regard it as Stevenson at his very best, and what could be better than that? Fiction stands for literature and the literary art with a completeness which an article can hardly have. We want to show the literary art at its highest, whether in English, French, or German."



MR. ORTMANS.

Photo by Lombardi, Pall Mall East.





MISS ALEXANDRA DAGMAR, NOW PLAYING DANDINI AT DRURY LANE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY HANA, STRAND.



## SMALL TALK.

The Queen's courier and director of her Continental journeys is staying at Nice for the purpose of completing the arrangements for her Majesty's residence at the Grand Hotel, Cimiez. As accommodation is required for nearly seventy persons, there is always a great deal to arrange; while the housing of the Indian attendants is a matter of especial difficulty, as separate apartments and separate kitchens have to be provided for them.

The Queen has been out in the Osborne grounds for some time every fine morning in her garden-chair, and in the afternoon her Majesty has always taken a drive, whatever the weather. The Queen can take delightful drives at Osborne without going outside her own gates, as there are over six miles of drives in the park, traversing the woods and valleys, and commanding lovely views over the Solent. Her Majesty is now in excellent health, and her only ailment is the chronic rheumatism in the knees, which prevents her from walking more than a few paces.

The Empress Eugénie has left Farnborough for the South of France, where she is to reside at her villa near Cap Martin for about four months. The Queen and Princess Beatrice have promised to pay her a visit during their stay at Cimiez.

The Duke and Duchess of Teck are to leave White Lodge shortly on a visit to the Queen at Osborne, where they will stay for three days. The Duke and Duchess will probably go to the Riviera early next month for a few weeks.

Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild's new yacht is a floating Aladdin's Palace, and her owner, who has just joined his recent possession at Marseilles, is delighted with the *Rona's* latest additions and improvements. Forty can dine comfortably in the luxurious dining-room, which, after the manner of American liners, is lighted by a handsome dome head-light. The Baron, who is an enthusiastic photographer, has had part of the deck-house fitted as a photographic studio, whence snapshots can be taken of all manner of places *en route*. Before the Cannes season opens, Baron Ferdinand intends making a short cruise with a party of specially-selected congenial spirits. One of these, in writing, mentioned that, at noon on that day, the thermometer registered seventy degrees at Marseilles, where they are evidently enjoying the sunny side of winter.

Montreuil-sous-Bois has risen into swift notoriety, if not fame, on the shoulders of its medical practitioners, who, absurd as it may seem, are, at the moment, on strike, like the miner or the mill-hand, though with obviously different reason. At Montreuil, it is a woman! But not the woman of romance. One, instead, who, armed with diplomas and degrees, has swooped down on this once peaceful hamlet to stir up strife among rival rural practitioners. The Mayor, in an evil moment, was, it appears, tempted to invite fair Madame Bertillon from Paris to fill a vacant post. Straightway did all local medicos lay down their lancets, and so hot has the combat waxed that recruits from Paris have been temporarily drafted to heal the sick until the men of Montreuil are vanquished, or the disturbing doctress banished. Meanwhile, amidst a climax of betting, odds are laid freely on the lady.

As if the eccentricity which lovely woman has lately allowed herself in the matter of coiffure had not gone far enough, we are credibly informed by pioneers of fashion in Paris, the source of all things new, that hair *à la Louis XVI.* is an inevitable forecast of the foolish future. What this means those who know the period can guess. It is simply an inflation of the present eccentric style, to meet the exigency of hats which grow more and more enormous. One shudders to think that the follies of our great-great-grandmothers, who had to kneel to get into their carriages, may revisit the glimpses of the moon, or that we may once more be forced, as were those estimable but frivolous forebears, to ride with our heads out of the window because of the combined proportions of frisettes, family diamonds, and such other furbelows of flowers and feathers as are in growing evidence at the moment. The Grand Duchess Vladimir has set the fashion of jewelled combs this winter, and, following that, the Duc de Morny, whose reputation of doing the right thing at the right time is well bestowed, has sent Christmas presents to various fair friends of tortoiseshell combs set with different precious stones.

The annual issues of peerages hail thick upon us. Despite the brave show of honours and arms, the hosts of cousins, and other concomitant attendants of greatness, the most unscientific genealogist cannot help being struck by the strange admixture of classes in the House of Lords. The Upper Chamber is more or less plebeian. In matter of ancestry the peer and the chimney-sweep meet on equal ground. True, the one has a record of his ancestors, and occasionally wealth; the other has neither; but the fact remains as stated. These be examples. The mother of one of our most respected dukes was the daughter of a worthy couple who made a modest fortune, ultimately invested in land, by retailing whisky in short measure, so 'tis traditionally alleged, and the bar sinister disfigured the escutcheon of another ducally wedded lady. The name Nevill is synonymous with all that is aristocratic, yet Lord Abergavenny has probably as many cousins among the peasantry as among the nobility. It is curious that to this peasant strain he owes his kinship to William Wordsworth the poet. The second Earl, the grandfather of the present Marquess, married the

daughter of John—better known as "Jack"—Robinson, Secretary to the Treasury from 1770 to 1782. Jack was the son of Westmorland peasants, and a *protégé* of the Lowthers. His father, also John, was the grandfather of the poet. The descendants of tailors, grocers, dyers, salters, tanners, mercers, and shopkeepers in the House are particularly numerous, but it is even more significant of the democratic character of the institution that two of its members are the not very remote descendants of barbers—the one of Sugden, Duke Street, Piccadilly, the other of Abbott, of Canterbury.

The account of an interview with Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson, published in a San Francisco paper, is somewhat distressing reading. It raises over again the old question of the prudence of publishing a dead man's letters, when his widow is still alive, without her sanction. Mrs. Stevenson says that her late husband's friends—if such she still holds them to be—have hastened to make money out of the scraps and scrawls he sent them. The charge reads as an ugly one. But a moment's reflection supplies its modifications. Has Mr. Henley rushed into the market-place with his dead friend's letters? Has Mr. Charles Baxter? That was the old trio renowned in song and famous in fable. Of the newer friends—friends such as those he made in Bournemouth, Lady Shelley and the Misses Ashworth Taylor, the most attached a man ever had—not one has brought out of his or her treasury the delightful letters of "R. L. S." We have the Vailima Letters it is true, but surely these must be published by the consent of Mrs. Stevenson and at her profit? We had also that letter which Mr. Gosse sent to the *Times*. And, as for that, it was obviously given and not "sold"? In this particular letter, which was written in acknowledgment of a dedication of Mr. Gosse's poems to him, Stevenson congratulated his correspondent on the prospect of an old age mitigated by the society of his descendants. To heighten the picture, the man who had learned his craft so well, and could hardly elude it in his least-considered letters, introduced his own figure as a sort of foil—he was childless. That word, uttered with regret, has, perhaps, a pang which the heart of a widow might imagine she should be spared. Again, in one of the Vailima Letters, Stevenson refers to his having been happy only once in his life, and that, too, on the chance of its misinterpretation, may be ashes in Mrs. Stevenson's mouth. Yet who does not know "R. L. S." as a man of moods? He is that, and nothing else, in some of his letters. And no chance phrase of his will ever be read to the discredit of Mrs. Stevenson—she may take the English reader's oath on that.

The death of Stevenson will have to be mourned all over again, it seems, by readers of his forthcoming "Weir of Hermiston," in *Cosmopolis*. They will know a second time what they have lost, face to face with that immortal fragment. It consists of eight chapters, and a ninth that is left incomplete. The whole will fill something over one hundred, and under a hundred and fifty pages. The story, you may judge, is scarce half told. But what there is of it is vital Stevenson, every line of it. The note of the story throughout is *vivacity*. That is a quality Stevenson never lacked, but it is found in this fragment in a greater degree than ever before. The story is dated early in the century, is Scottish to the core, and, though it is one of grim adventure—the betrayal of a woman, the slaying of the betrayer, the avenger's condemnation to death by his own father, the Lord Justice, and his final rescue from prison and flight—there is more space given to love-making, and a closer study of feminine character is presented, than in any other book from the same master. The character-drawing of the young laird's housekeeper may rank as Stevenson's creation among women, and there is this additional endearing thing about her—that you feel, now and again, she is suggested by your old friend, Alison Cunningham. Legend had spread abroad that that beloved nurse had become something of a terror in the family life of her idol; and in "Weir of Hermiston," Kirstie Elliott is described as "a helpmeet at first, then a tyrant, and at last a pensioner." This Kirstie was fifty when, "in the Indian summer of her heart," she lived only to adore the young laird, whom she had tended as a babe and still tended at twenty. "By the lines of a rich and vigorous maternity, she seemed destined to be the bride of heroes and the mother of their children; and, behold! by the iniquity of fate, she had passed through youth alone, and drew near to the confines of age a childless woman. The tender ambitions she had received at birth had been, by time and disappointment, diverted into a certain barren zeal of industry and fury of interference. She carried her thwarted ardours into housework; she washed floors with her empty heart." Her "passion—for it was nothing less"—for this boy partook of "the loyalty of a clanswoman, the hero-worship of a maiden aunt, and the idolatry due to a god. It was a rich physical pleasure to make his bed or light his lamp for him when he was absent, to pull off his wet boots, or wait on him at dinner when he returned."

In one of his Vailima Letters Stevenson speaks of the "incredible" pains he has given to the first chapter of "Weir of Hermiston." Yet, after that even he remodelled it. It was worth the trouble, and the other seven and a bit are worthy of it. The very title was a serious trouble to him. "Braxfield" he would have liked it to be, but the judge of that name was not treated with enough historical care to warrant the adoption of it. Another name, "The Hanging Judge," he abandoned; also "The Lord Justice Clerk," also "The Two Kirsties of Cauldstaneship," and "The Four Black Brothers." No doubt in choosing "Weir of Hermiston"—with some of the sound-romance of Dobell's "Keith of Revelston" about it—he chose finally for the best.



"BLUE BEARD," AT THE ALHAMBRA.

Photographs by Alfred Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.



JULIA SEALE.



ISMAIL (ETHEL BRAND).



A SLAVE (FLORENCE LEVEY).



BLUE BEARD (H. AGOUST).



SUPERS.



FATIMA (MDLLE. AGOUST).



COMIC SERVANTS (G. ALMONTI AND A. AGOUST).



G. ALMONTI, CERRI, AND A. AGOUST.



MEMBERS OF THE BALLET.



I am fully expecting to find the speedy disappearance from our Christmas festivities of the Harlequinade. Year after year it has been getting more feeble in humour and more monotonous in detail. Clown, with his string of sausages, his butter slide, and his red-tipped poker no longer impresses the twelve-year-old patron of pantomime. Harlequin, who runs about as though in search for the *raison d'être* for his own existence, is also in a bad way. Pantaloon is as feeble as he looks; we have lost some of our veneration for the police, on account of researches by Professor Ray Lankester and others; while Columbine does ballet steps, and does them badly. They have served their time, one and all, but the world has aged half a century during the last decade, and will have little more to do with them. "R.I.P." Mr. W. S. Gilbert, fresh from his triumph at the Law Courts, may add them to the category of people who never will be missed. The short-story writer is one of the only real sufferers by their disappearance. Clown with a sick wife, or similar domestic misfortune, was a paying subject at this time of year; Columbine, a paragon of all the virtues and supporter of a widowed mother and several crippled sisters, sold largely. Now, widowed mothers are out of short-story fashion; and, since the *Daily Telegraph* came out with its Christmas scheme, we envy rather than pity the cripples.

I have in these columns protested against the murderers of carols, and now I have a suggestion for the benefit of those in whom the traditions of Christmastide and New Year linger. Why should not some of our theatres supply a choir of carol-singers for the fortnight before and after Dec. 25, and give us songs well sung and effectively accompanied? I scarcely think such a proceeding could rightly be deemed indecorous while church and stage are so happily united. Nowadays managers look eagerly for the material wherewith to bring their programmes up to date, and advertise their attractions as "seasonable." Yet there is little in December that would not be as well in June. A properly planned series of carols would be excellent from every point of view. Men and women whose views do not take them churchwards have much of their earliest sentiments lying dormant. Now, herein lies the astute manager's chance. The foregoing statement may appear callous and mercenary, but, after all, theatrical enterprise is mercenary by design, and artistic by accident. If I thought the plan I suggest were simply a pretty one, I would not give it the honours of print. My belief that the suggestion has a sound commercial basis tempts me to bring it before the public. I think the idea will be favourably received.

The tuneful singing of Christmas carols so graphically described in Charles Reade's vivid novel, "Put Yourself in His Place," has sadly deteriorated in these latter degenerate days, and it is devoutly to be wished that the long-talked-of "Society for the Suppression of Hideous Street Noises" could step in and stop those small crowds of boys and girls who at this season of the year congregate upon our doorsteps, and, without the slightest idea of tune, of time, of sound, or of sense, make the gloaming hideous by murdering the time-honoured rhymes of which our ancestors were so fond. A little story told me by a clerical friend, the other day, will serve to illustrate the unmeaning manner in which these singers (?) render the Christmas carol. He was calling on an old female parishioner, and in course of conversation she confided to him that, in her opinion, "these here carol-singers must do a deal of harm in shakin' the beliefs a body was brought up to." Inquiry as to her reason for this supposition elicited the response that a party of them had howled at her cottage-door a concourse of uncanny sounds, which had for their refrain the unbelieving assertion that there was no hell! "'No 'ell, no 'ell,' that was what the little vagabonds shouted out, sir, if you'll believe me, at the end of every verse."

By the way, as this is the season for children's presents, I can't help once more mentioning those delightful tin soldiers, whose excellence was discussed at length in these columns some months since—soldiers that are a splendid counterfeit of our crack regiments, and have the advantage of being turned out by an English manufacturer. I have seen some fresh regiments—that is to say, fresh to me—that are quite adorable. Prince Albert's Somersetshire Light Infantry fix their bayonets, kneel down, or stand at ease in the most natural manner; while as to the gorgeous Life Guards which Mr. W. Britain has turned out, with their black chargers, their drawn swords, their helmets, and breastplates, not to mention their dashing officer on his prancing steed, all I can say is that, if I were a nursemaid, I should have fallen utterly and entirely in love with the whole regiment at first sight.

The Westminster Town Hall was excellently well filled the other evening, the occasion being a dramatic and musical entertainment given in aid of the Christmas treats to the seven hundred children of the Holy Trinity, Westminster, Schools. Under the able direction of Mr. Martyn Van Lennep, the well-known teacher and composer, a thoroughly enjoyable bill of fare had been provided, and the programme, which included songs and excerpts by Massenet, Rubinstein, Cowen, Blumenthal, Hatton, Chaminade, and the popular director of the entertainment himself, was listened to with marked approval. To my mind the most noteworthy item was a Spanish love-song, by the brilliant Mdlle. Chaminade, which was magnificently rendered by a pupil of Mr. Van Lennep, Miss Dorothy Glenton. This very young lady has a contralto voice of remarkable quality, and her style, finish, and dramatic expression are altogether to be highly commended.

The "Daly Dolls," dressed in copies of costumes worn by the leading ladies in "An Artist's Model," have been a great success. They were sold to the audience on behalf of the *Daily Telegraph* crippled children

fund, and, in the first instance, a moderate number was obtained from Paris, and nobody anticipated an urgent need for more. It came about, however, that at the first *matinée* performance, when the dolls were on view, the entire stock was purchased, and on the evening of the same day a notice was put up to comfort anxious buyers with a promise of more. This novel method of aiding a deserving charity is probably due to the fertile mind of Mr. George Edwardes, who is ever happy in his ideas. The calls upon the purses of the charitable are frequent and monotonous, and it is only natural that enterprising people should look about for a fresh method of appealing to the benevolent. The idea of the dolls might well be developed. We collect souvenirs and photographs of our footlight favourites, why not preserve copies of their dresses? When I take ladies to the theatre, they become enthusiastic over the costumes, describing them in terms unknown to men. If they could buy models of the dresses, in the course of time poor man would comprehend something of the jargon of description. And this is a consummation devoutly to be wished.

Though Christmas, in the estimation of up-to-date young persons of both sexes, is played out, and a thing altogether of the past, yet to an enormous number of folks it certainly seems a very substantial reality—though, perhaps, not always a pleasant one. Indeed, during last week it was impossible to get away from Christmas, even if one desired to do so, for Christmas crowds bent on Christmas shopping were encountered in every direction in the Metropolis; and though President Cleveland, with his Message, snuffed out Armenia in a twinkling, and put Ashanti into the shade, he did not, apparently, for one moment interfere with the cheerful throngs bent on purchase, to whom Venezuela and the Monroe Doctrine were of as little concern as fog or frost, sunless street, or muddy pavement. With regard to the outskirts of the shops, there was not much at the West-End or in the City to indicate that Christmas had again arrived, but the season was much in evidence in the busiest of our suburban streets. In my suburban wanderings, north and south, east and west, during last week, I saw nothing more really Christmassy—and pretty and tasteful, too, withal—than the broad thoroughfare on the eastern side of the Brixton Road, just above Brixton Station, which rejoices in the name of Electric Avenue, a name to which, when the shades of night have fallen, it appears perfectly entitled. Here the shopkeepers had placed Christmas-trees in grass-green barrels at short intervals along the pavements, had wreathed the ironwork pillars of their arcade with evergreens, hung festoons of evergreens across the street from column to column, and, among all this wealth of greenery shone hundreds of electric lights, and the scene, as one looked at it from the main road, was a remarkably effective one. To judge from the comfortable-looking crowds whom I saw jostling one another as they moved from shop to shop, the enterprising and tasteful tradesmen will not have decorated in vain.

By the way, I heard rather an amusing story in connection with one big emporium for provisions in this quarter. Outside its hospitable doors were various prize animals, showing their handsome persons in stalls, and all unconscious that, ere many days were over, some of them, at any rate, would have taken up an *inside* position. Among them were two fat porkers, and, with regard to them, an inquisitive lady pestered an attendant with numerous questions. Their birth, their breeding, their future—all were interesting to this garrulous female. "Only three months old, is he?" she exclaimed, pointing to the rounded piggy. "Dear me, what will he be in six?" "Bacon, mum," phlegmatically replied the attendant, probably tired of the conversation, which, happily, his response terminated.

A busy but a very different sort of crowd was that which I encountered in the Commercial Road East and the East London Dock Road on my way to and from the Missions to Seamen Institute, where a lady friend of mine is temporarily residing, and helping to forward the excellent work of that institution. Here there were crowds, certainly, and, as I returned, much light and bustle, but the lights were those on innumerable barrows and trucks at the wayside, their flaring naphtha lamps very much less like Fairyland than the electric lights I have mentioned, and the crowds, not unnaturally, looked less comfortable and jolly than those in the more *bourgeois* and prosperous suburb. I should like to say a word now for the Missions to Seamen Institute, and tell my readers how they made Christmas bright for the many seafaring men who enjoy the hospitality of that institution. The big hall, which, when I was there, was being made gay for the "festive season," has a concert platform at one end, and contains a billiard-table, a bagatelle-board, and all sorts of games, such as draughts, Halma, &c., for the amusement of the sailors. When I was there I was amused to see two young ladies, who had called to see my lady friend, playing a double-handed match on the bagatelle-board with a couple of tars, while a little group of seamen pretended to be alarmed at the sable which one of the players had taken from her throat, and which certainly presented a rather vicious and lifelike appearance in the position into which it had fallen.

The Christmas Festivities for this admirable mission, which has branches all over the country and abroad, extend from Dec. 24 to Jan. 3, and include magic lanterns, songs, and stories; a special entertainment of "Santa Claus and His Magic Well," with the chaplain in the name-part; a "Christmas Family Party," a grand concert, and a "Watch-night Gathering." I am sure that the sailors' friends (and that term, I think, includes everybody in this country) will be glad to hear that ladies and gentlemen come from every part of London to help in the "Festivities" that give such pleasure to our gallant tars.



"BLUE BEARD," AT THE ALHAMBRA.

*Photographs by Alfred Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.*



SOME MEMBERS OF THE BALLET.



SOME MEMBERS OF THE BALLET.



A week or so before Christmas, I turned into Drury Lane Theatre to see Mr. Niel Forsyth, the indefatigable lieutenant of Sir Augustus Harris. As usual, the callers were about twelve deep, and, while waiting for my time to come, I strolled into the upper circle and found pantomime-rehearsals going on in all directions. The one and only Glover was hard at work with the chorus in the big room by the sanctum of the manager; right down below me, on the stage, the Knight of the Lane was hard at work helping Herbert Campbell and Dan Leno to be funny. The place was lighted by T-pieces; there was a collection of heroes and heroines of pantomime in every direction, and I seemed to be the only lazy person in the place. Soon after Mr. Forsyth came out, and we went down to the stage and looked at the coach of Cinderella and a supper-table laden with every conceivable delicacy—in canvas. The house itself, shrouded in brown holland coverings, and unlit save on the stage, seemed to be quite unaware that within a fortnight it would be one of the happiest spots in London, that it would have two good meals of enthusiastic men, women, and children every day, and stand dressed in plush and decorated with gilding. Perhaps Old Drury is becoming *blasé*, and has forgotten to be grateful for the change from drama to pantomime.

If the new Opera-House promised to Londoners becomes an accomplished fact—and I see no reason to doubt its completion—there will be a rivalry of nightingales during the coming London season. Granting that there is room for two competing houses, one is glad to welcome both, for competition is ever better than monopoly. It is hard to believe that, in the season of snow and bitter weather, impresarios are busy anticipating the spring-time, that negotiations and contracts are flying all over Europe and America. Meanwhile, some singers are resting on their laurels, and others are increasing them. Madame Melba is one of the latter. She is touring the United States, and giving concerts. A friend, writing to me from Chicago, after dealing briefly but brightly with the attack of Anglophobia from which his countrymen are suffering, goes on to say that Madame Melba is having a triumphant tour, and singing delightfully. I suppose she will be back here in the spring, and I look forward with pleasure to hearing her again as Marguerite in "Faust." Of all her *répertoire*, I like that rôle the best. She possesses the rare combination of gifts that enable her to look, act, and sing the part; there is never any apparent effort, everything is spontaneous. America has a good thing for the time being, but must be prepared to part in the time when the winter of our discontent becomes the glorious summer of the season and the *opéra*.

The announcement that Mrs. Scott-Siddons had been delighting the Emperor and Empress of Germany with her recitations revived my memories of something like eight-and-twenty years ago. It was in '68 that I saw Mrs. Scott-Siddons, at the Haymarket, essay the part in which Mrs. Patrick Campbell has recently shown us "how not to do it." Mrs. Scott-Siddons is a great-granddaughter of the immortal Sarah Siddons, and I remember that she brought to her task no small share of the personal beauty of the Kembles. Yet, on the whole, her rendering of the passionate and impulsive Italian was ineffective. To my thinking, the actress never had any real gift for the stage, and her temperament was not that stage temperament, so difficult to describe, so indispensable to theatrical success. Mrs. Scott-Siddons never *acted* that incomparable character of Juliet. She was excellently trained, but entirely mechanical; her lines were never ill-delivered, but she was utterly without tragic force, and my memory of her Juliet is that of a recitation in costume, the scene with the Nurse being her best, and the Potion and Banished scenes her weakest. I am not surprised to hear that Mrs. Scott-Siddons is an accomplished and admirable reciter. Her intelligence and refinement, her appearance and her powers, should make her remarkably well-fitted for the rôle, and I am glad to learn that her gifts are so highly appreciated in high places.

"The Queen's Proctor" is the extremely piquant title of a new musical comedy that Mr. Horace Lingard, of "The Old Guard," "Falke," and "Pepita" fame, is contemplating producing. It remains to be seen what the powers that be think of so daring a play-name.

I am curious to see how provincial audiences will care for Mr. R. C. Carton's Dumas adaptation, "The Squire of Dames," which is, before long, to be taken on tour by Miss Emma Hutchison, a relative of Mr. Charles Wyndham. Miss Hutchison has familiarised our country cousins and suburban neighbours with many pieces from the Criterion repertory old and new, such as "The Bauble Shop," "Pink Dominoes," "Truth," and "Brighton."

Sunderland theatre-goers have had the first-fruits of that new play, "The Egyptian Idol," to which I referred some months back. The idol in question occupies an old cabinet which is perfectly air-tight, and in which one of the female characters is accidentally immured, with fatal effects. There seems to be some good stuff in this drama by Messrs. Richard Saunders and Maurice Bandmann.

All sorts of distinguished people have lately been giving recitals for more or less special purposes. There have been, for instance, Mr. Bancroft and Mrs. Patrick Campbell, and Mrs. Kendal is now to be added to the list, for she has just given a dramatic recital at Great Grimsby, in aid of the local hospital. Grimsby is the native place of Madge Robertson (to use the old familiar name), whose birth is recorded to have taken place there on March 15, 1848.

It was with sincere regret that I heard of the death of Miss Georgiana Pouncefort, for twenty-three years an important member of the Lyceum company, down from the old Bateman days right through the whole grand list of Irving successes. I first saw Miss Pouncefort act more than two decades back, and, curiously enough, it is two of the earliest of her many impersonations at the Wellington Street house that I remember the most vividly: the Queen in "Hamlet," a performance always fraught with sad dignity, and Catherine, the wife of the dream-haunted burgomaster in "The Bells." In pre-Lyceum times, Miss Pouncefort had played Queen Mary in Tom Taylor's "Twixt Axe and Crown," to the Elizabeth of the beautiful Mrs. Rousby, and, earlier still, she was for some years leading lady at the Surrey Theatre. Miss Pouncefort was esteemed by all who knew her. Her honoured name is now borne by a younger member of the theatrical profession.

Variety performers assume all kinds of extraordinary titles, generally grandiloquent, and often ludicrously inappropriate. Of these, a flagrant instance is to be found in the so-called "Emperor of the Concertina"! Why not "Baron of the Banjo" when they are about it?"

Mr. C. T. Studd, the celebrated old Cambridge cricketer, and, in the opinion of many people, almost the finest all-round player of the noble game ever sent forth by either of the Rival Blues, was lecturing, the other night, at the Polytechnic Institution, on the subject of China. The famous brother of "G. B." and "J. E. K." went out as a missionary to China some years ago, it may be remembered, and hence he has a first-hand knowledge of the theme he chose for his Polytechnic address.

I don't think it is very generally known that M. Paderewski has an invalid son of about twelve. The poor lad is said to be gifted beyond his years, and already is familiar with four languages.

America is to have another class-paper, representing a branch of the entertainment profession. It is to be called the *Vaudeville*, and, as its name indicates, will be devoted to the interests of vaudeville artists, a subdivision of performers unknown to England—under that specific title, at least.

Many good stories have been told of the dreadful blunders perpetrated by ignorant examinees. Here are two rather droll cases of mistranslation from and into the French. One bright youth construed "pas de deux" as "the father of two," while a comrade was two or three degrees funnier still—unconsciously, of course—in translating "the Eastern Hemisphere" as "Le Demi-Monde Orientale"!

The success of the "Penny Poets" published by Mr. Stead is undoubted, and I am pleased to learn that he contemplates issuing a "Penny Prose" series, that will aim at dealing the death-blow to the "penny dreadful" and all its near relations. It is astonishing to note how the now familiar yellow-backed series of poetry has travelled, and how eagerly it has been welcomed by the intelligent but impecunious. I confess that I look forward to each number, that I collect them carefully, and, though by nature a scoffer and by accident a book-reviewer, I have nothing but praise for the little volumes, despite their occasional faults. The idea is so brave and so plucky, the publishing has been done so effectively, and the get-up is so good, that the reading public is very greatly indebted to the editor of the *Review of Reviews*. And now Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street, together with a miscellaneous collection of his nasty friends, ruffians and swashbucklers all, is going to get his quietus, and the writers of healthy though occasionally blood-stained fiction are going to take the place of honour. There will be just a few sufferers by the innovation. One or two small publishing-houses, a few second-class printers, and a small coterie of curious individuals who write "penny dreadfuls" literally by the yard, and make a very fair living by so doing, will all be worse off.

I once knew a man who wrote what he used to call "penny bloods." He wasn't a bit like the traditional writer. He didn't live in a Fleet Street slum; he wasn't dirty or untidy, although he did drink very freely. He was a scholar, and lived in the poetic neighbourhood of the Fulham Road. I made his acquaintance by chance, and, being a good listener, he tolerated me, and narrated many things which are better unpublished. He had been a schoolmaster, could quote freely and aptly from Horace, Cicero, and Virgil, and he was well read in a class of French literature. He must have made money, for, at odd intervals, I met him out, dining himself regardless of expense. Although endowed with some taste, he gave none of it away in his books, which simply reeked of villainy and blood. A few years ago there was a lull in business, he got into debt, took something that he thought the owner had no real use for, and is now serving his Queen, in company with Jabez, the Strand barbers, and other misunderstood toilers. I was sorry to lose the occasional pleasure of his company, although in the latter days it had degenerated into an expense. His contempt for popular authors was great, and the way he summed them up was picturesque.

Messrs. Smith, Sons, and Downes, of Queen Victoria Street, send me an ingenious little pocket-book, which is differentiated from most of the charming pocket-books which are always associated with each succeeding New Year's Eve by the fact that things are so arranged that the pencil is fixed in the particular page and date that one is using from day to day. This novelty, which bears the name of "The Self-Registering Diary for 1896," is made in several different sizes.



Although as yet rational dress has not met with such general acceptance at the hands—or should we say legs?—of Australian women as with their French and American sisters, still, as readers of the *The Sketch* have been informed from time to time, there are daring spirits among them who do not hesitate to boldly adopt the bifurcated garb and flaunt it in the eyes of the public. The picnic at which a number of Melbourne women figured in male costume, and lived for a day or two, after the masculine fashion, in tents, has been illustrated in this journal, and readers have also been presented with the Australian rationalised female as she appears on the bicycle. Here is a picture of the Australian girl in a new rôle; that of riding horseback, man-like, clad in the double-barrelled garment. The young lady in question is an art student at the Melbourne National Gallery, and with her brother she rode three hundred miles in ten days through Gippsland, one of the roughest and most sparsely populated portions of Victoria, where travelling is long and tiresome, the country mountainous, densely timbered, and picturesque, and convenient halting-places are few. The young lady is enthusiastic in praise of the rational dress, and the greater comfort to be derived from its use, and consequently the more sensibly balanced position of the rider on horseback, as

remain, for they had evidently found by experience that the rational dress uncovered a multitude of deficiencies in the female structure which, in skirts, they suspected of containing the potentialities of perfect symmetry and unattenuated loveliness.

Though an enthusiastic bicyclist, I have, so far, contented myself with figuring, in the Park and elsewhere, on a "hired conveyance," feeling that, in case I purchased one to-day, some improvement of to-morrow would immeasurably supersede it. This would be too much to bear philosophically, and I have, therefore, gone on deferring the proud moment of possession. Meanwhile, progress progresses apace, and the latest of "many inventions" is a folding bicycle of Captain Gérard's, which is particularly useful in tramps abroad, since, like the rubber bath of travel, it plays an unobtrusive part in our impedimenta. Captain Gérard claims for it a more important motive, however, since it is to be devoted to the uses of war, having "special facilities" for this blood-thirsty object. What would our Crusader ancestors have thought of such unheroic transit? one cannot help thinking. But this unwarlike steed goes one better than even a cavalry charger, seeing that it allows the rider to plant his feet on the ground and take steady aim without



A MELBOURNE MAID AHORSE.

compared with the cumbrous habit and ungainly attitude which an unkind custom hath invented to mitigate the pleasure of horse-riding for women.

While some of the women of Melbourne are thus engaged in a vigorous fight for the knickerbockers, others are waging deadly war against these "abominations," and they have succeeded in inducing the Victorian Cycling 'Tourists' Club to strictly prohibit the use of rational dress among its lady members. The club is composed of male and female wheelists, and the wearing of the rational dress by a few members was felt to be subversive of perfect peace and pleasure, because those who strongly objected to the garb were forced to ride with the stronger-minded females, and thus incur the ridicule of a public not yet accustomed to the new dress, and a suspicion that they approved of women riding in this fashion. So an agitation was set on foot to rigidly suppress these rationalised females, with the result that the following resolution was almost unanimously carried by the club:—"That the action of the committee in proposing to pass a bye-law to the effect that lady members of the club be prohibited from wearing the rational dress on club-runs be approved and confirmed." The general male objection seemed to be summed up by one member thusly: "In the case of the majority of women, knickerbockers simply brought to light all that was least sightly in women." And, seemingly, in the interests of poetry, sentiment, and worship of the female form divine, these Melbourne male cyclists decided that the skirt should

moving from the saddle. It is evident what a grip this cheap, swift method of seeing the world now obtains when in one touring club alone there are twenty-five thousand members. All the same, I cannot think that for women the craze will settle down into custom, for, however smart the attitude this sport entails, it can never be considered either womanly or becoming.

The old English sheep-dog, or bobtail, Harkaway, whose picture is given elsewhere in this issue, is very well known on the show-bench. Among his achievements are first prizes at Brighton, Cruft's, Northampton, Sheep-Dog Show at Manchester, and Championship at Sheep-Dog Club Show at the Westminster Aquarium, besides various medals, cups, and specials. He was bought by his present owner, Mr. H. Dickson, for £150, some time ago. His grizzle-and-white coat is very heavy and harsh, and he has a grand head and rare bone. He is by Champion Grizzle Bob ex Rachel by Wall-Eyed Bob.

Excellent is the Christmas Number of the *Yachtsman*, with a series of colour-reproductions of famous yachts.

South Africa grows like a mushroom. The *South African Review*, which is published in Cape Town, has issued a Christmas Number. There is a good deal of colour-printing in it, and a series of portraits of South African beauties. Altogether, it is exceedingly creditable. From Johannesburg comes a monthly devoted to and called *Machinery*.



## WHAT PANTOMIME COSTUMES COST.

"I can only spare you a very few minutes, I am afraid," said Mr. C., as I entered his private room, not many hundred yards distant from Drury Lane (writes a representative of *The Sketch*). "I can talk to you and look over these sketches at the same time," he continued, as I seated myself.

"Many people still seem to think," I remarked, as an opening, "that everything connected with at least the pantomime and variety stage, in the way of costumes, is tawdry and cheap."

"Just so," replied Mr. C.; "but it isn't. What do you think of that?" tossing over a pretty water-colour sketch, which looked like M. Wilhelm's work, or that of some disciple.

"It is very pretty."

"There's not much of it," remarked the costumer, smiling. "It's for the Fairy Prince in a big provincial show. Tights, trunk-bodice of satin, head-dress of feathers, wig, shoes, dress-sword, a few paste ornaments, and the long velvet cloak lined with satin floating from the shoulders—and yet it costs between thirty-five and forty pounds. The dress-sword is a good one, not a sham—a woman would soon smash an inferior article; the tights are of the best silk, and yet the slightest carelessness in putting them on would mean a 'ladder,' and a new pair at a couple of guineas. The aigrette for the head-dress is real, too, so you see how the money goes. The long, curled, flaxen wig which will be worn by this young lady" (showing me a sketch of a figure in silvered armour), "who will appear on the boards of a suburban theatre, will run into a five-pound note. The suit of armour, which has been specially moulded for her—her waist is only a trifle over twenty inches—costs, in rough figures, fifteen to eighteen guineas. Underneath, she will wear a specially woven suit of silk and wool—of which she will require three—such as a *tableau vivant* girl would, only somewhat thicker, covering her from neck to feet, which make a hole in two guineas each. Then there is this sort of costume, which will be worn by half-a-dozen girls in the same show. It is a somewhat fantastic adaptation from the warrior's costume of ancient Peru. The tights are the sole clothing almost to the waist, though the fact is somewhat disguised by the hanging belt of metal discs in front and behind. The bodice is of satin, moulded to the figure, and ornamented with metal discs, both pendent and used as trimming. All this costs money, and, with the halberds and the gold-plated metal skull-caps, with their pyramidal ornaments of bells, and the silvered glaives on their legs, each costume will cost somewhere near forty pounds, or the whole lot not much less than £250. And this is a mere item of the expense."

"But these must be exceptionally costly costumes?" I said.

"Oh, not at all. Of course, there are many of the other dresses and costumes which cost much less—those of supers, and ladies in the third or fourth row. For instance, there will be a ballet of sprites in one pantomime. The dresses of the children, though pretty, are simple and inexpensive, costing about two guineas apiece, everything included. But," continued Mr. C., after a pause caused by a sudden entry of a messenger with a note, "it is by no means the 'principal boys' and 'fairy princes' who swallow up the money. For example, each of the four dresses we are making now for four pretty girls who will dance a somewhat remarkable Parisian quadrille have something like sixty-five yards of fine silk in them, although they are not of the serpentine make. Each one will cost not far short of eight guineas; then there are the tights, three guineas; the dancing-drawers and innumerable petticoats all trimmed with fine lace, dozens and dozens of yards of it to each set, making a big hole in six guineas. Then there are the beautiful wigs these young ladies will wear, three guineas apiece at the least. The same young *danseuses*, by the way, are provided with handsome pages' costumes, costing ten guineas each, in another scene, and handsome Court dresses, in yet another, costing double that. A good allowance for them? Oh, nothing out of the way, I assure you. Now the hero of one of the finest pantomimes we shall see this year on Boxing Night has no less than six changes, which will cost, with all et ceteras, not a penny under £130. She has a magnificent figure, and will draw double that money in salary during the run."

"Stage jewels are costly, I suppose?" I ventured to remark.

"Of course, comparatively speaking, they are. The mere spangles sewn on the dresses as trimming are by no means cheap, for make-believe jewels that is. In one pantomime, for which we are making the principal costumes, the Princess will wear a paste tiara costing not less than £40—if real it would cost nearer £400; a girdle costing £25—if the genuine article it would make a big hole in a couple of thousand; and a necklace costing £50. Wigs are all prices, from a sovereign up to fifteen guineas, and some cost even more than that. Then there are the masks. The masks for one pantomime last year cost £400. A good mask takes a lot of modelling and making, I can tell you. Masks cost all sorts of prices, but I have none cheaper than five shillings, and often provide pantomime grotesques costing as many pounds."

"Are there any other items of expense?"

"Good gracious me, yes! But I suppose that you mean especially with reference to costuming? Ah, I thought so. Well, there is the 'padding' bill, which often runs away with a large sum. The ladies of the back rows are not all of them naturally models of physical perfection.

You see, a good figure costs the management money, and many of the girls who can dance well enough for the second and other rows are not Venuses. Too much padding in the front won't do, for padding won't shine alongside of Nature. But, in the comparative retirement of 'behind,' it can be used to effect. It has to be very carefully and accurately done, of course. This costs money—sometimes not less than three or four pounds. If it is done cheaply—that is, badly—it won't stand wear and tear. Some of the girls in the big ballets at Olympia had their calves working up to their knees, or sagging down to their ankles. It didn't matter so much there; but on a smaller stage, where individuals have more chance of being noticed, it would never do."

"I should think one could generally detect it," I remarked.

"Think so?" rejoined Mr. C., getting up as a hint that his spare time was nearly exhausted. "If well done, perhaps, you wouldn't, though. There's Miss X. Z.—"

"You don't mean to hint——?"

"Yes I do. I know people rave about her beautiful figure, and that her photo sells by hundreds. She's a clever burlesque actress, an extremely clever 'principal boy,' but she's no figure to speak of naturally. Every time she wants re-making up it costs close on twenty pounds. But it's well worth it. Her salary would be about half what it is if it were not for a little skilful padding."

## A "PRINCIPAL BOY."

Miss Hettie Montefiore is one of those pretty and promising young actresses that, up to now, the provinces have claimed as their own; but Mr. J. B. Mulholland has retained her services this year for his pantomime of "Robinson Crusoe," at the Métropole, Camberwell.

Miss Montefiore's first introduction to the stage was through that most winsome of comedy-operas, "Dorothy," under the management of Mr. H. J. Leslie, and she gained much and varied experience in the Gaiety Theatre successes "Ruy Blas," "Faust Up to Date," and "Carmen Up to Date." She went on a most eventful Continental tour with the second and last-named productions, playing Siebel, and combining Miss Letty Lind's speciality, "The Man in the Moon." Her experiences embraced terrible journeys, and an exciting quarantine on the borders of Roumania. On her return, she toured with Mr. Milton Bode as the Kangaroo Girl, and Ellen to the Dr. Bill of Mr. J. G. Grahame. She then received a valuable all-round experience of stock seasons of some twenty weeks, under the management of Mr. Eade Montefiore during his tenancy of the Paisley Opera-House, while this autumn she toured as Grace Roseberry in "The New Magdalen." Her pantomime engagements include Glasgow Theatre Royal, '93-4, as Fairy Queen under the management of Messrs. Howard and Wyndham and T. W. Charles; while last year she sustained the principal rôle of Robin Hood in the pantomime of "Babes in the Wood" at Newcastle, and toured in a burlesque on the same subject for some forty weeks. Miss Hettie Montefiore is married to Mr. Eade Montefiore, a well-known provincial lessee, theatrical manager, and newspaper proprietor.



MISS HETTIE MONTEFIORE.

Photo by McIlwrick, Paisley.





MISS HETTIE MONTEFIORE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY LANGFIER, GLASGOW.



## THE BOOK AND ITS STORY.

## "THE NOVELLINO OF MASUCCIO."\*

To the sumptuous and stately series, which includes Mr. Waters's translation of the "Nights" of Straparola, there is now added the novels of one of the earliest realists—the Juvenal of the fifteenth century—Englished by the same capable pen. And, that these volumes lack not the enrichments of their predecessors, Mr. Hughes again lends his pencil to effective delineation of striking scenes in the famous tales. Masuccio of Salerno, although he flourished a century earlier, is a somewhat less shadowy personality than Straparola. He was born probably about 1420; he is known to have been alive in 1474; but after that year there are only faint traces of him. He came of a



THE PRICE OF A WIFE.

noble family—the Guardati—whose history is a long one, since descendants of theirs were living at Sorrento as recently as twenty years ago. The period of Masuccio's activity was full of interest. Alfonso the Magnanimous, who had added the Crown of Naples to that of Aragon, vied with his great contemporary, Cosmo de Medici, in patronage of men of letters; the Greek scholars who were expelled from Constantinople found sheltering welcome at his Court, and in these circles Masuccio was an intimate. His novels, dedicated to the famous of his time, are, he tells us, "all true," and in many cases he is "only setting down what he has learnt by the evidence of his senses." Therein he differs from Boccaccio as a writer of fiction, and from Straparola as a collector and adapter of folktales and legends. The life around him supplied ample material, but, for the most part, he limits himself—wide field enough—to the lewdness of monks and priests. Indeed, his professed aim is to expose "la guasta vita de finiti Religiosi." The sanctimonious rascals cared little for the lashes of the satirist's scourge; so thick-skinned were they that in the next century the flagellations of Erasmus and Sir Thomas More were not less needed. More describes them as "shuddering if they have left out a verse in a Psalm," and then "as telling dirty stories longer than their prayers." But if the friars were lechers, the women were wantons. It is an old story, "Like priest, like people," and these latter found in self-indulgence escape from the thought of the tyranny of government. "Rulers and ruled alike," to quote Mr. Waters's figure, "breathed an air heavy with the miasma bred from the dismal swamp of cramped and artificial life." Love derided and discarded moral obligations; the sacred ties of life were profaned, the higher sexual relations dragged in sensual mire.

Throughout these fifty tales of Masuccio's, with their probing of social diseases, buffo mingles with tragedy. He enjoys the telling of the thing which he satirises; he lingers round the comic elements in every

intrigue; but he never omits the moral which, in the shape of comment, "in a measure fills the place of the chorus in Greek drama." In one of these, after "screaming himself hoarse over the crimes of women," he recalls to mind a famous passage in Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici" in devoutly wishing that "it had been God's pleasure and Nature's to have suffered us to be brought forth from the oak-trees—or, indeed, to have been engendered from water and mire like the frogs." Each tale, although unconnected by any framework such as that with which Boccaccio surrounds his stories, is linked to its forerunner by some hint as to its theme at the close of the comment, and the whole series is grouped under five parts. One of the earliest tells how a Dominican friar seduces a holy virgin by means of a sham revelation, which, in flaming letters of gold, announces her destiny as the mother of the "fifth Evangelist"; while, in that which follows, another wily monk cleverly gets himself out of the scrape into which an intrigue with a married woman has brought him. Surprised by the sudden incoming of the husband, he tells him that he has been curing the wife of a distemper by means of relics of "the blessed San Giffone." But, in hurrying off, he leaves his breeches behind him, when the woman, with ready wit, tells her befooled spouse that they are the relics in question. As for the friar, when his Superior, who is no saint himself, hears of the affair, he convenes the brethren, and, telling them what miracle had been wrought by the breeches, orders that they be brought from the house in solemn procession, which is accordingly done.

In the first of the stories (Number XV.) of which the courtesy of the publishers enables us to reproduce illustrations, a Lord Cardinal, enamoured of a lady, bribes her husband, a poor and avaricious fellow, to send her to him. This, under guise of testing her constancy, he agrees to do. But when he would fetch her the next day, she refuses to leave, and, handing him a purse of three hundred ducats, bids him begone. Thus bought and "sold," he retires into exile. In the other story (Number XXXII.), a Florentine, smitten by the charms of Giustina, a Venetian lady, takes counsel of an old woman, who advises him to send a message, purporting to come from the Abbess of Santa Chiara, desiring to see her. Giustina accepts this as genuine, and on her way to the Abbess is carried off by her lover to his house, where the same night a fire breaks out. The captain of the watch, who was likewise enamoured of Giustina, rushes in, and, on the plea that she is a common harlot, hales



THE CAPTAIN OF THE WATCH.

her to prison. By stratagem, the Florentine's old serving-woman takes her place there, and the next morning, when the supposed Giustina is brought before the Signoria, the laugh is turned against the captain by the old crone, and virtue, of course, is triumphant.

The notes which Mr. Waters has appended to the second volume, although brief, suffice to explain certain bibliographical and other questions arising out of the stories.

\* "The Novellino of Masuccio. Now first translated into English by W. G. Waters. Illustrated by E. R. Hughes, R.W.S. London: Lawrence and Bullen.



## A NOVEL IN A NUTSHELL.

## HICKSON: A HALF-CASTE.

BY LOUIS BECKE.



**M**AUKI HICKSON and I were coming across from the big native town at Mulinu'u Point to Apia one afternoon when we met a dainty little white woman garmented in spotless white. Hickson, touching his hat, walked on across the narrow bridge that crosses the creek by the French Mission, and waited for me on the other side.

This tiny lady in white was a lovable little creature. There was not a man in Samoa but felt proud and pleased if she stopped and spoke to him. And she could go anywhere on the beach, from respectable Matautu right down to riotous, dissolute Matafele, and make her purchases at the big store of Der Deutsche Handels Plantagen und Süd See Inseln Gesellschaft without even a drunken native daring to look at her. That was because everyone, dissolute native and licentious white, knew she was a good woman. Perhaps, had she been married, and had she had a yellow, tallowy skin, and the generally acidulated appearance peculiar to white women long resident in the South Seas, we wouldn't have thought so much of her, and felt mean and contemptible when she taxed us, in her open, innocent fashion, with doing those things that we ought not have done. But she had a sweet, merry little face, set about with dimples, and soft cheeks hued like the first flush of a ripening peach; and when she spoke to us she brought back memories of other faces like hers—far-away faces that most of us would have liked to have seen again.

Just by the low stone wall, that in those days came close down to the creek, the little lady stood under the shade of some cocoanuts and spoke to me.

"Who is that horrible, sulky-looking half-caste?" she said, jerking her sunshade towards my late companion.

"That is Hickson, Miss Milly," I said; "a very decent, steady fellow, with a white man's heart."

"Decent! steady! and with a white man's heart!" and Miss Milly's pink-and-white cheeks reddened angrily. "How I hate that expression! No wonder all sorts of horrible things happen in these dreadful islands when white men will walk down the road with a cruel, remorseless wretch like Hickson—the man that murdered his sister."

"You should not say that, Miss Milly," I said. "Of course, that is the common report, spread about by the captain of the German brig—. But that is because Hickson nearly killed him for calling him a nigger. And you must remember, Miss Milly, that I was there at the time. Hickson was our second mate. His sister was killed, but it is a cruel thing to accuse him of murdering her; he was very fond of her."

"Oh dear! I am so glad to hear someone say it isn't true," and the bright eyes filled. "They say, too, she was such a pretty little thing. However did she get to such a terrible place as Ponape? Come up and see uncle and me before you go away again. Good-bye now; I'm going to buy a water-bag at Goddefroy's."

I think that Hickson must have guessed that he had formed the subject of the conversation between the little lady and myself, for, after we had walked on a bit, he said suddenly—

"I think I'll go aboard the *Menchikoff* and ship; she wants some hands, and I would like to clear out of this. Except two or three that have known me for a long time, like yourself, everyone looks crooked at me."

"I think you are right, Hickson, in going away. Samoa is a bad place for an idle man. But won't you come another trip with us? The old man (the captain) thinks a lot of you, and there's always a second mate's berth for you with him."

Hickson's eyes flashed fire. "No! I'd as lief go to hell as ship again with a man that once put me in irons, and disgraced me before a lot of Kanakas. I've got white blood enough in me to make me remember that. Good-bye"—and he shook hands with me; "I'll wait here till the *Menchikoff's* boat comes ashore and go off and see Bannister."

Poor Hickson! He was proud of his white blood, and the incident he alluded to was a bitter memory to him. Could he ever forget it? I never could, and thought of it as I was being pulled off on board.

It was at Jakoi's Harbour—in Ponape—that it happened. Hickson and I were going ashore in the long-boat to buy a load of yams for our native crew, when he began to tell me something of his former life.

His had been a strange and chequered career, and in his wanderings as a trader and as a boat-steerer in a Hobart-Town whaler he had traversed every league of the wide Pacific. With his father and two sisters he had, till a few years or so before he joined us, been trading at Yap, in the Western Carolines. Here the wandering old white man had died. Of his two sisters, one, the eldest, had perished with her sailor husband by the capsizing of a schooner which he commanded. The youngest, then about nine years old, was taken care of by the captain of a whaler that touched at Yap, until he placed her in charge of the then newly founded American

Mission at Ponape, and in the same ship Hickson went on his wanderings again, joining us at Tahiti. And I could see as he talked to me that he had a deep affection for her.

"What part of Ponape is she living on?" I asked.

"I don't know, I'm sure. Here, I suppose; and, if you don't mind, while you're weighing the yams, I'll go up to the mission-house and inquire."

"Right you are, Hickson," I said; "but don't forget to get back early; it's a beastly risky pull out to the ship in the dark."

We went into a little bay, and found the natives waiting for us with the yams, and Hickson, after inquiring the way to the Mission, left me.

Ponape in those days was a rough place. It was the rendezvous of the American whaling-fleet, that came there for wood and water and "other supplies," before they sailed northward along the grim coasts of Japan and Tehantar Bay to the whale-grounds of the Arctic Seas.

And sometimes there would be trouble over the "other supplies" among the savagely licentious crews of mixed men of all nations, and knives would flash, and the white sand of the beaches be stuck together in places with patches and clots of dull red. It was the whaler's paradise—a paradise of the loveliest tropical beauty, of palm-shaded beach and verdure-clad mountain, imaginable; a paradise of wonderfully beautiful and utterly, hopelessly immoral native women; and, lastly, a paradise of cheap native grog, as potent and fiery as if hell had been boiled down and concentrated into a small half-pint.

It was dark, and the yams had all been brought and stored in the boat before Hickson returned. By the flickering light of a native fire in a house close by I could see that something was the matter with him. His face was drawn, and his black eyes gleamed out like dully burning coals from the thick, wavy hair that fell about his temples.

"I'm sorry I'm late," he said, and the moment he had spoken I knew by the dangerous huskiness of his voice that he had been drinking the native grog.

Staggering into the boat, he sat down beside me and took the tiller.

"Give way, *fanau seoli*" (children of hell), he growled to our crew of Samoans and Rotumah boys; "let us get these yams aboard, and then I'm coming back to burn the—mission-house down."

Slowly the heavily laden boat got way on her, and we slid away from the light of the native fire out into the inky blackness of night. Beyond a muttered curse at the crew, and keeping up that horrible grinding of the teeth common enough to men of violent passions when under great excitement, Hickson said nothing further till I asked—

"Hickson, what's the matter? Couldn't you find your sister?"

He sat up straight, and, gripping my knee in his left hand till I winced, said, with an awful preliminary burst of blasphemy—

"By God, sir, she's gone to hell! I'll never see poor little Kätia again. I'm not drunk, don't you think it. I did have a stiff pull of grog up in the village there, but I'm not drunk; but there's something running round and round in my head that's drivin' me mad."

"Where is she?" I asked.

"God knows. I went to the mission-house and asked for the white missionary. The—dog wasn't there. He and his wife are away in Honolulu, on a dollar-cadging trip. There was about three or four of them cursed native teachers in the house, and all I could get out of them was that Kätia wasn't there now—went away a year ago. 'Where to?' I said to one fat pig, with a white shirt and no pants on him. 'Don't know,' says he, in the Ponape lingo; 'she's a bad girl now, and has left us holy ones of God and gone to the whaleships.'"

Coming from any other man but Hickson I could have laughed at this, so truly characteristic of the repellent, canting native missionary of Micronesia; but the quick, gasping breath of Hickson and his trembling hand showed me how he suffered.

"I grabbed him and choked him till he was near dead, and chucked him in a heap outside. Then I went all round to the other houses, but everyone ran away from me. I got a swig of grog from a native house and came right back." Then he was silent, and fixed his eyes on the ship's lights seaward.

I could not offer him any sympathy, so said nothing. Lighting our pipes, we gazed out ahead. Far away, nearest the reef, lay our brig, her riding light just discernible. A mile or two further away were three or four American whalers, whose black hulls we could just make out through the darkness. Within five hundred yards of us lay a dismantled and condemned brig, the *Kamehameha IV.*, from whose stern ports came a flood of light and the sounds of women's voices.

We were just about abeam of her when Hickson suddenly exclaimed—

"Why, sir, the boat is sinking. Pull hard, boys; pull for the brig. The water's coming in wholesale over the gunwale. Hadn't you fellows enough sense to leave a place to bale from?" And he slewed the boat's head for the brig.

She had two boats astern. We were just in time to get alongside one and pitch about two tons of yams into her, or we would have sunk.

The noise we made was heard on the brig, and a head was put out of one of the ports, and a voice hailed us. This was the brig's owner and captain, W.

"Come on board and have a cigar!" he called out.





MISS MARY MOORE IN "THE SQUIRE OF DAMES," AT THE CRITERION THEATRE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED ELLIS, UPPER BAKER STREET, N.W.

Leaving the crew to bale out and re-ship the yams, we clambered on deck.

Now, this brig and her captain had a curious history. She was, two years before, as well-found a whaleship as ever sailed the Pacific, but, by some extraordinary ill-luck, she had never taken a fish during a cruise of seven months, although in the company of others that were doing well. The master, one of those fanatically religious New Englanders that by some strange irony of fate may be often met with commanding vilely licentious crews of whaleships, was a skilled and hitherto lucky man. On reaching Ponape the whole of his officers and crew deserted *en masse*, and went off in other ships. Utterly helpless, W. was left by himself. There were, of course, plenty of men to be had in Ponape, but the ship's reputation for bad luck damned his hopes of getting a fresh crew.

Whether the man's brain was affected by his troubles I know not, but, after living like a hermit for a year, alone on the brig, a sudden change took place in his character and conduct. Sculling ashore in one of his boats—she was a four-boat ship—he had an interview with Nanakin, the chief of the Jakoints district, and returned on board with five or six young girls, to whom he gave permanent quarters on board, selling from time to time his sails, whaling gear, and trade to keep his harem in luxury. At the end of a year the brig was pretty well stripped of all of any value; and W. went utterly, hopelessly mad.

The brig's cabin was large and roomy. The table that had once nearly filled it had been taken away, and the floor covered with those peculiarly made Ponape mats which, by rolling up one-half of either end, forms a combined couch and pillow. As Hickson and I, following the crazy little captain, made our appearance, some four young girls, who were lolling about on the mats, started up, and looked at us with big, wondering eyes, ablaze with curiosity. Both Hickson and myself—and he had roved throughout Polynesia from his boyhood—were struck by the extraordinary beauty of these four young creatures: so young and innocent in looks; in sin, as old as Ninon d'Enclos.

Placing one hand on the shoulder of the girl nearest to him, and fixing his big, blue, deep-set eyes on us, W. waved the other towards the girls, and said, "Welcome, gentlemen, welcome. Behold these little devils, who, in the guise of sunburnt angels, are the solace of a man forgotten by his God, and the father of a family residing in Martha's Vineyard, United States of America."

Then he gave us each a cigar, and told us to be seated, while he got us a glass of New England rum.

Hickson, with a contemptuous smile, sat with folded arms on a short, heavy stool. One of the girls, unshipping one of the two lights from the hook on which it hung, followed W. into a state-room to get the rum. Presently, we heard them coming out, W. carrying a wicker-work-covered five-gallon jar; but two girls came out instead of one. The stranger kept close to W., one hand holding the sleeve of his shirt.

Stooping as he set the jar on the floor, I had a good view of the new-comer, and a deadly fear seized me. I knew at once that she was Hickson's sister! He was coarse and rough-looking, but yet a handsome man, and this girl's likeness to him was very striking. Just then, Hickson, not even noticing her, rose, and said he was going on deck to see if the boat was ready, when the strange, quavering tones of W. arrested him.

"Be seated, sir, for another minute. Nijilon, get some glasses. You see here, gentlemen, the fairest and choicest of all my devil-vestals, one that—"

Hickson looked at her, and, with a terrified wail, the girl clutched W.'s arm, and placed her face against his breast. With lips drawn back from his white teeth, the half-caste sprang up, and his two clenched hands pawed the air. Then from his throat there came a sound like a laugh strangled into a groan.

Scarce knowing what I did, I got in front of him. He dashed me aside as if I were a child, and seized the stool. And as he swung it round above his head, the girl raised a face like the hue of death to his. Then the blow fell, and she and W. went down together.

Hickson rushed on deck, and tried to spring overboard. I think he must have struck the main boom, for one of our crew who was on deck heard him fall. We got a light, and found him lying senseless. Two of the "vestals" held him up, while I went below for some rum and water. W. was lying where he had fallen, breathing heavily, but not seriously injured, as far as I could see. But one look at the closed eyes of the girl told me she was past all help. The heavy stool had struck her on the temple.

Placing Hickson in the boat with two men to mind him, I took the other two with me into the cabin of the brig. W. was seated on the floor, held up by two of his harem, and muttering unintelligibly to himself. The other two were bending over the figure on the floor, and placing their hands on her bosom.

"Come away from here, L.," said Harry, one of our Rotumah boys, to me; "if the Ponape men come off, they will kill us all."

We could do nothing, so we got back into the boat, and, with the still senseless body of Hickson lying at our feet, pulled out to the ship.

When he came to he was a madman, and, for his own safety, our captain put him in irons. We put to sea next day, our skipper, like a

wise man, saying it would go hard with us if W. died, and four Yankee whalers in port.

The day after we got away Hickson was set at liberty, and went about his duties as usual. At nightfall I went into his deck-cabin. He was lying in his bunk, in the dark, smoking. He put out his hand and drew me close up to him.

"Harry says she is dead?"

"Yes," I whispered.

"Poor little Kátia; I never meant to hurt her. But I am glad she is dead."

And he smoked his pipe in silence.

## MISS MARY MOORE.

Miss Mary Moore, whose portrait in her present rôle of Mrs. Dennant in "The Squire of Dames" appears on the opposite page, has within the last decade won an enviable position on the contemporary stage. Since she first established herself as a favourite stage heroine by her delightful rendering of the character of Ada Ingot in "David Garrick," she has played many parts, and most of them with much success. Some one or two may not have fallen completely within the range of her artistic equipment: they might, perhaps, have been more strenuously rendered, but upon all Miss Moore has set the imprint of her own winsome personality. Indeed, it is always interesting to notice how deftly she



MISS MARY MOORE.

Photo by A. Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.

moulds a part into harmonious conformity with her own particular resources and stage methods. In such rôles as her present one in "The Squire of Dames," for instance, or that of Mrs. Mildmay in "Still Waters Run Deep," Miss Moore substitutes for the more forcible effects of which they may admit in the hands of other actresses a quiet concentration and a natural womanliness which are often admirably convincing. As a comédienne, too, Miss Moore has the knack of making a part peculiarly her own. One or two of her comedy rôles—that of the *ingénue* in "The Silent Battle," for instance—might, in their original conception, have been Maud Millett parts; others, perhaps, Lottie Venne parts—witness that of Mrs. Thorpe-Didsbury, in "The Home Secretary," to which Miss Venne did actually succeed; but, in Miss Moore's hands, they all become distinct creations, imbued with a dainty comedy and a tender charm which are her especial property. And in the broader comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer" she played with a most attractive coquetry and looked bewitching in her old-world costumes. And her pathos has a true ring about it. She makes the lovelorn Ada Ingot's sorrows wondrous pitiful, and the delicate sentimentality of her Jessie Keber, in "The Bauble Shop," was very touching. But the best record in her career is, undoubtedly, her Rebellious Susan, a part which she played with more subtlety and a wider grasp of character than she has as yet shown in any other performance in her repertoire.



## A TALK WITH MISS FRANCES EARLE.

Photographs by A. Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.

It was in a Kensington drawing-room some weeks ago that I met Miss Frances Earle (writes a *Sketch* representative). "What brings you up to town?" I asked. "I thought you were gyrating around the provinces?"

"Oh, did you? I thought, perhaps, you might have discovered that our company had a three-weeks' engagement at the suburban theatres. But," confidentially, "I always run up to town when I can."

"I suppose you yearned to go on the stage from your earliest childhood?" I interrogatively observed. "They always do, don't they?"

"If you are going to be sarcastic, I shall leave you. I always did cherish, from my earliest youth, a desire to go on the stage. Don't laugh—it's really, *really* true. My mother, as you know, had a beautiful



MISS FRANCES EARLE AS MINA IN "A GAIETY GIRL."

soprano voice, and she, from the first, encouraged me to sing. After I had gone through the usual musical tuition at the Girls' High School, I became a pupil of Dr. William Rea, the well-known teacher of music at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Whatever skill I possess I owe in no small measure to his patient training. All this time, as perhaps you also know, my people knew nothing of my wish to go on the stage. They would have been terribly annoyed, of course."

"Of course," I assented politely.

"Please don't interrupt. And," with a mischievous smile, "even in those days I used to pay surreptitious visits to the theatres, which served to deepen my longing for theatrical work. I came at last to be thoroughly possessed, and even infatuated, by this desire. But I did not neglect to use every opportunity to secure the training which, even in my ignorance of stage matters, I realised to be necessary. I not only went in for having letters after my name in connection with the Royal Academy of Music—from which, by the way, I hold five or six certificates—but I passed the usual Cambridge Locals and the College of Preceptors' exam., rounded off—mind, I don't say 'finished'—by going through a course at Trinity College."

"But when did you first go on the stage?"

"Oh! I am coming to that. It was on April 22, 1892. I knew Mr. F. W. Wyndham, lessee of the Newcastle Theatre Royal, who, you are aware, has since gone into partnership in the management of the Tyne Theatre with Sir Augustus Harris. Mr. Wyndham was taking his benefit on this eventful day in April, and intended to produce 'Trial by Jury.' He asked me to take the part of the plaintiff. I saw that my chance had come, and did my best. The critics said very nice things about me, so I conclude that I made an impression. At any rate, I was offered an engagement by Miss Cissy Grahame directly afterwards. I have been with one or other of Miss Grahame's various companies ever since. I had a pleasant little part in 'A Pantomime Rehearsal,' and have also appeared in some other productions; but my most numerous appearances have been in 'A Gaiety Girl,' of which I am very fond. Besides, I have played in 'The Late Lamented,' and 'Faithful James,'

and other semi-farcical pieces, and I was, indeed, advised to go in for comedy altogether. But, if I might be the chooser, I would rather identify myself with something worked-out on musical lines. My ambition is to appear in genuine *opéra-bouffe*."

"Though at present you content yourself with occasional excursions into the realms of pantomime, eh?"

"I thoroughly enjoy pantomime work, I can assure you. My first two pantomime engagements were at the Theatre Royal, Newcastle-on-Tyne, where, on each occasion, I took the part of 'second boy.' At one of these pantomimes Miss Vesta Tilley was 'principal.' Last Christmas I was 'second boy' in 'The Fair One with the Golden Locks,' at the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool. This year, I go to the Prince's, at Bristol."

"So the astute Mr. Chute has secured you, then?"

"Yes; and I am so pleased to go to Bristol. Even in winter Clifton is a most delightful place. Mr. Chute saw me at the Alexandra, and, strangely enough, thought I would do well as 'principal girl.' Rather a change, isn't it? I am to appear at Bristol as Cinderella. Now, don't ask me if I saw Miss Ellaline Terriss. I went to the Lyceum, just as everybody else did, and was quite as much charmed as, I suppose, you were. I incidentally heard, though I don't know how far it is true, that Mr. Chute means to make the 'Cinderella' of the West a semi-operatic one. At any rate, I *do* know that one or two songs have been specially written for me. Yes, my voice is a mezzo-soprano. I take the greatest care of it, though, somehow or other, stage-dancing is rather injurious. It seems to take away some of the fulness and richness. Still, I have gone through a thorough course of dancing. It is an indispensable accomplishment nowadays, though I should like it better if it were not for the disadvantage I have mentioned."

I could well imagine that Miss Earle's graceful and willowy figure would be seen to distinct advantage in a well-arranged skirt-dance. But I did not say so. Instead, I asked Miss Earle how she liked touring in the provinces.

"Well," was the reply, "it has penalties; but I think the provinces form a splendid training-ground for a young actress. You avoid the danger of following one rut, you know, and whatever powers you possess are greatly strengthened by the necessity of adapting yourself to the tastes and requirements of the diversified kinds of audience, whose likes and dislikes vary greatly in different parts of the country. In fact, the provinces afford the best opportunity of cultivating that versatility so much needed by the theatrical novice."

"And what about the future?" I went on.

"The future is——"

What the future was I never learned. Just at that moment our charming hostess appeared on the scene, with the remark, "Here is



A LA CARNIVAL.

Miss Earle. We have been looking for you everywhere!" Miss Earle was summarily whisked away, and so I was left to answer the question for myself. Nor was it difficult to find an answer. With her admirable musical training, her fine voice, her fascinating stage presence, and her refined and irrepressible vivacity, there can be no doubt that the future of this fair and *chic* Novocastrienne is extremely promising.



MISS FRANCES EARLE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED ELLIS, UPPER BAKER STREET, N.W.



# "AT THE SIGN OF THE GUILLOTINE." \*

It is pleasant in these days of hurried, slipshod fiction to happen upon a story such as this, every page of which bears evidence of patient study and careful workmanship, combined with literary gifts of no mean order. This seems to be Mr. Harold Spender's first essay in novel-writing, and



MR. HAROLD SPENDER.  
Photo by Vandyk, Gloucester Road, S.W.

an excellent first performance it is. Since Dickens's "Tale of Two Cities," few novelists have attempted to deal with the tremendous subject of the French Revolution. It is, however, easy to see that Mr. Spender had an equally clear perception both of the difficulties and the possibilities of his theme. In the historical novel there should surely be not too much history, but just history enough. Mr. Spender has utilised history without in the least outraging it. From his pages—written, as they are, in a simple, modest, unpretending style, with no perceptible straining after effect and no florid bombast—the reader gains a wonderfully clear impression of the unspeakable horror,

the universal insanity of that vast social upheaval. He has had the ingenious idea of presenting Robespierre in love with a good but rather limited little *bourgeoise*, and of giving him, as a rival, a member of the Convention named Louvier. Mr. Spender makes Robespierre's fall the direct—indeed, the inexorable—result of this rivalry. The story is convincingly told. Like a strange panorama, the course of events—logical, connected, orderly—is unrolled before the reader. Everything centres round Robespierre, the egotistic pedant, strong enough to climb to power, but miserably weak and hesitating at the crisis, and deaf to the vigorous counsels of St. Just; driven, nerveless and half unconscious, to his doom on that awful 9th of Thermidor; and the yet more terrible day after—the day of the tumbrel and the *belle mère*. The minor characters in the book are no less convincing. Robespierre's landlord, old Duplay, the Marquis de Saens, the Abbé Lemaitre, Duplay's wife and sons, are all carefully drawn, yet with no tedious elaboration. Edmund Burke appears only once, yet the impression given of Marie Antoinette's advocate is complete. The strange groups of *émigrés* in London are presented with many graphic touches, and the reader is made to understand the spirit of the old order, unrepentant and untaught by disaster, particularly in the ill-fated attempt at Quiberon on July 21, 1795, the horrors of which are admirably described. Mr. Spender's style, as has been said, is simple, but it is not colourless; he uses dialogue discreetly, and the reader is carried on most skilfully from incident to incident. The book is the work of a man of taste, and of a considerable range of culture, familiar, with no mere book-knowledge, with the period he attempts to describe. "At the Sign of the Guillotine" is an exceedingly careful and conscientious piece of work, and, at the same time, possesses the great merit of being interesting from cover to cover.

## "THE MAKERS OF MODERN ROME."

It is doubtful whether Mrs. Oliphant ever did a better service than in writing the series of books that began with "The Makers of Florence." Her early novels are, of course, marked by originality and grasp of character, and this series is but a compilation of a very popular kind. But it hits its aim with great accuracy; it found seekers of just the amount of culture it had to offer, and was a genial guide to intelligent beginners on the road to Italian art and history. In "The Makers of Modern Rome" (Macmillan), there is, as in the others, no pretence at original research, and very likely Mrs. Oliphant repeats many errors of detail. But the spirit of the City of the Popes is in her, and she could not go very far wrong. The story of the two great Popes, of the influential Roman ladies, of Rienzi, of the great houses, their rise and fall, is admirably told, with fervour, enthusiasm, and imagination. By the English in Italy her book will be specially treasured. The publishers have made it a very handsome one. Mr. Pennell's and Mr. Rivière's illustrations give it additional interest, and altogether exceptional distinction.

# IN AND ABOUT HATFIELD HOUSE.

Apropos of the article in the January number of the *English Illustrated Magazine* on the Premier and his distinguished ancestors, the accompanying article on his home, Hatfield House, will be read with interest. Eighteen miles from London—a mere wish, and we are arrived, in these days of quick travel—stand the historic house and lands of Hatfield, firstly belonging, in old Anglo-Saxon times, to the Crown, and then, before our great landmark, the Conquest, to the pious Abbot of Ely and his Catholic successors—a free gift from King Edgar of far-away memory. Under monkish rule, as we see by old records, the Manor revenues greatly increased, for the friars were good farmers, and good landlords too. Many hundred poor were daily fed at the gates, and "Hatfelle" Manor prospered exceedingly when, in the first Henry's reign, this estate became, by Royal appointment, an episcopal see, henceforth to be known as Bishops Hatfield or felle. Delightfully quaint is the language in which Earl Pembroke's descent on the renowned Hatfield cellars in the third Henry's reign is described in some annals of the period.

For five hundred long years did the Bishops of Ely rule well and wisely at Hatfield, a portion of the original palace being still in good preservation, where the visitor may recall in imagination past pageants of whose actual splendour, however, we of sedate days know little. Where the present rose-garden fills the air in June with heavy sweetness stood formerly, according to ancient archives, three sides of a quadrangle, forming part of the palace, with a court in the centre; Elizabeth's garden, with prim hedges of yew and its antique sun-dial, is intact. Nicholas West, the last Catholic Bishop of Ely, died in March, 1534, after which that chaste and gentle monarch, Henry VIII., fearing the wrath which his spoliation of monasteries excited, gave the succeeding subservient bishop several valuable Church lands in exchange for Hatfield, which then became a royal residence. Here within those historic walls Prince Edward heard of his father's death, and, taking the sceptre into his already failing hands, adjudged the palace to his sister, Princess Elizabeth. "The third day of Desember cam ryding from hir Plase my ladie Elizabeth's grace from Somerset Plase down Fleet Strete, etc., and so hir grace took hir waye to Bishops Hatfelde." So the Cotton MS., which all may see in that mine of little-explored riches, the British Museum. The spring garden, where Elizabeth played the lute and virginals in intervals of Greek and Roman poets, still remains carefully preserved in its original form, though the ancient wing which she occupied was taken down when rebuilding the present mansion.

It was in the time of James I. that Hatfield became the home of the Cecils, the first Lord Salisbury giving his residence of Theobalds, which the King greatly admired, in exchange for Hatfield, which has remained with his descendants to the present day. It was this first earl, too, who built the existing house to eastward of the ancient palace, showing, in its erection, so much well-considered taste that to this day it remains an example of what an English country mansion should be. Age has not withered its massive beauty, and time leans lightly on its mossy bricks and mellowed stone enrichments. Exteriorly, a corridor answering to the ancient conventual cloister runs the whole length of the basement, and a central tower over the great entrance rises seventy feet above it, in the middle of the gabled roof being the clock-tower and cupola. These complete a pyramidal effect on the entire noble building, which was finished in 1611. Ascending by the great staircase from an immense hall, we come on King James's Room. A long, wide gallery, extending the whole length of the south front, past this royal apartment, is filled with artistic treasures which might well grace a national museum. Then there is the Library, with its collection of State papers, and the Winter Dining-room, also in the west wing, besides the Rose Bedroom, the Yellow Bedroom, and the South Bedroom. Lady Salisbury's Winter Bedroom is in the east wing, as is also the square State Bedchamber and the Billiard-room. It would be futile, however, in the limited space at command, to undertake a detailed description of the mansion. Its terraces, gardens, and stately avenues of approach would alone complete the narrator's allotted column, before entering the portals of a dwelling whose stereotyped summary would ill convey its ancient charm or present magnificence.



THE FIRST MARQUIS OF SALISBURY.

\* "At the Sign of the Guillotine." By Harold Spender. London: Fisher Unwin.

THE ART OF THE DAY.



NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

AFTER THE DRAWING BY K. KOGLER.



## ART NOTES.

Messrs. C. W. Faulkner and Co., of 41, Jewin Street, E.C., have organised an interesting Fine Art Competition, which will combine the ordinary advantages of an exhibition, to be held at the Galleries of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours, Piccadilly. In connection with this scheme these patrons propose to give away £500 in prizes, and



When all the air is full of light,  
And yet no shadows fall.

G. C. HAITÉ, R.B.A.

they also declare themselves open to purchase designs, pictures, &c., to the value of a further sum of £500, making a total, as will be seen, of £1000 in prizes and purchases.

The artists who have consented to act as judges in this matter are Mr. Philip H. Calderon, R.A., Mr. Luke Fildes, R.A., and Mr. Andrew Gow, R.A. As to the particulars, we need not go into them very closely here: it may, however, be well to mention that the first prize consists of one hundred pounds, and that the prizes from that sink in a descending scale, ending with ten prizes of twenty pounds each. When the selections have been made, the patrons design to hold a separate exhibition of the remaining works, and "to make arrangements with probable buyers to inspect the same with a view to effecting sales thereof on behalf of the artists." It is added that "the usual fifteen per cent. discount or commission will be deducted on all such purchases or sales," and that the subjects for pictorial selection on the part of the artists should be

"pleasing and happy rather than tragic," and suggestions are made of "domestic scenes, children at home, at prayer, at church, at school . . . of beautiful scenes (preferably British)." Happy British artist, and happy, thrice happy, British art!

The art sales for the year are concluded at Messrs. Christie's, and it is computed that no less than a million pounds have, during that period of time, changed hands at those historical rooms. As a matter of aside interest, one may reckon the total sum charged for commission to be not less than £75,000, which, as a contemporary puts it, is a "fairly acceptable fortune for one man." The final sales have been but of a moderately sensational character. A quantity of engravings fetched sums varying from 20 to 60 guineas. Landseer's "Stag at Bay," engraved, after the famous picture, by T. Landseer, artist's proof, was sold for 58 guineas, and a similar treatment of the well-known "Monarch of the Glen" was considered worth 51 guineas. A large paper copy of Constable's "English Landscape," engraved by David Lucas, went for 48 guineas, and an engraving by the same artist, after Constable's "The Loch," was purchased for 55 guineas.

Seventeen drawings by Louis Haghe went for quite respectable prices: for example, "The Church of St. Anne's, Bruges," 45 guineas; "The Christening Font, St. Peter's, Rome," 29 guineas; and "A Council," 27 guineas. One or two pictures were of special interest, and realised somewhat higher prices. A portrait by Lely of Lady Castlemaine, better known to the Court of Charles II. as Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland, was sold for 126 guineas; and Lawrence's portrait of Miss O'Neil, afterwards Lady Belcher, went for 95 guineas, while a "portrait-pair" by Laguillière of Madame de la Suze and Madame de la Seudery fetched 205 guineas.

We rejoiced last week over the announcement that the Royal Academy, at its Winter Exhibition of the Old Masters, had resolved to devote a room to the works of the Barbizon School. An even happier piece of tidings was reserved in the announcement that the authorities of the Grafton Galleries intend to honour themselves by giving an exhibition of works belonging to the same great school of art in January. The double exhibition, running concurrently at Burlington House and the Grafton Gallery, may at last serve to inform this most neglectful country, at least to some extent, of the glories of a school which was triumphantly producing its chapter of poetry in paint while the distinguished painters of the Victorian Era, early and middle, were telling their pathetic stories of James the Second learning of the arrival of the Prince of Orange, of Hamlet at the play, of happy domestic scenes, children at home and at prayers, and of landscape, "preferably British." All these hang in our National Gallery; where are Corot, David, Daubigny, and their inimitable comrades? London, at least, knows them not.

The Society of Lady Artists will in the future hold its exhibition at the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall East. The day for sending in pictures will be Jan. 20, sculpture and decorative work Jan. 21.



STRANDED.—AN UNFINISHED SKETCH BY THE LATE J. MALLORD W. TURNER, R.A.

WINTER IN THE NORTH.

*Photographs by G. W. Wilson and Co., Ltd., Aberdeen.*



HAZELHEAD WOODS, ABERDEEN.



ST. MACHAR CATHEDRAL, ABERDEEN.



"THE PRISONER OF ZENDA" IN THE UNITED STATES.

*Photographs by Sarony, New York.*



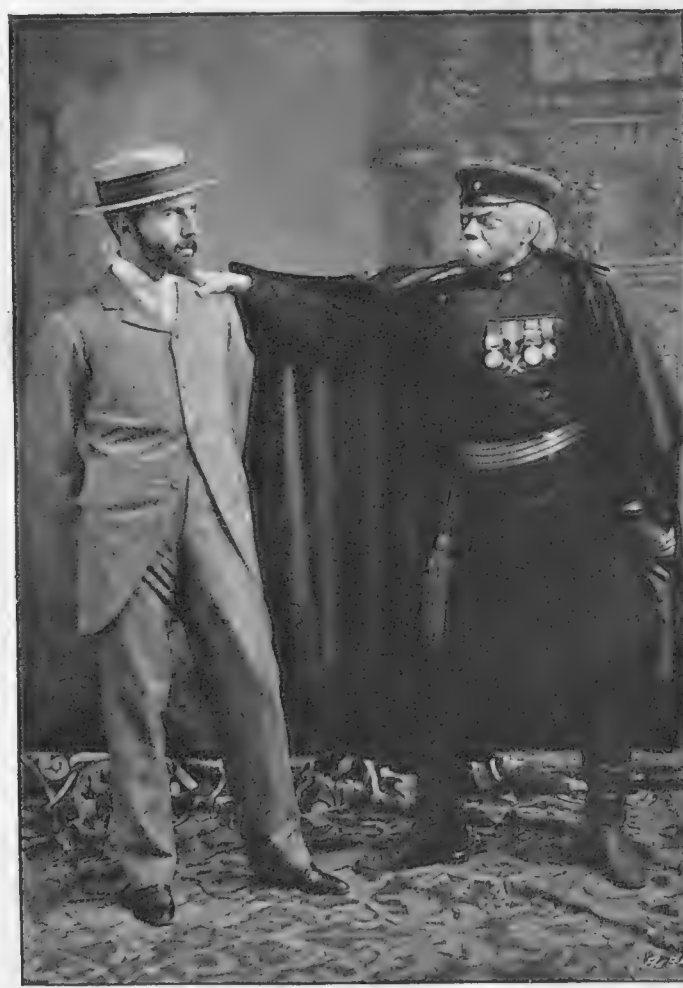
MR. SOTHERN AS RASSENDYL (ACT V.).



MR. SOTHERN AS RUDOLPH (ACT III.).



MR. SOTHERN AS THE KING (ACT II.).



RASSENDYL (ACT I.), AND MR. ROWLAND BUCKSTONE AS COLONEL SAPT.

"THE PRISONER OF ZENDA" IN THE UNITED STATES.

*Photographs by J. Byron, New York.*



THE DISCOVERY (PROLOGUE).



THE LIKENESS (ACT I.).



## SOCIETY'S BIBLE.\*

"Debrett" for 1896 has been published, and the reviewer, regarding it in the spirit of proud impartiality that so well becomes a "nobleman of nature," is able to express himself satisfied with the scheme and execution of the work. "Debrett" is sub-edited to perfection, the misprints are wonderfully few, and the brief family histories, if sometimes fabulous, are mostly accurate. So much by way of criticism. Now for a casual examination of some of its leading features. Such a work as this is interesting as much for what it conceals as for what it reveals. In certain cases, the editor is remarkably frank. He tells us, to take a couple of examples, that in 1808 the Earldom of Lindsay fell to Sergeant David Lindsay of the Perthshire Militia, who did not assume the title; and that Lieutenant Morville Wraxall, of the Egyptian Coastguard Service, eldest son of the luckless baronet of the same name, was formerly employed as a pawnbroker's assistant. These facts are interesting, but why not carry the principle a little farther?

It is not stated, for instance, that "George Gwyther, Esq.," the husband of Henrietta Anne, thirteenth Countess of Rothes, was originally

"starred" in the Metropolis along with Lady Hinton, who was formerly a ballet-dancer at the Surrey, and an organ. His musical recitals do not seem to have been altogether successful, for more recently he was "running" a kinetoscope show in that undesirable locality (from a residential point of view), Leather Lane. His eldest son, who, through the kindness of relatives of the family, has been educated as a gentleman, formerly held a commission in a Militia regiment, and is now reported to be engaged in tea-planting in Ceylon.

There appears to be a conspiracy on the part of the editor to avoid explicit reference to the stage. Lady Francis Hope unostentatiously figures as "Mary Augusta, daughter of William Yohe." This seems incomplete without such an addition to the parent's name as "of Bethlehem, Pa., ironmoulder." Madame Melba also appears, but almost unrecognisably. She is the wife of Mr. Fred Armstrong, brother of an Irish baronet, and is described as "Helen Porter, daughter of David Mitchell, Esq." This David is the Scotsman whom Mrs. Crawford, in a flash of uninspired omniscience, mistook for a Hebrew an account of his fore-name. The issue of the Armstrong-Mitchell-Melba union is a son, George Nesbitt, born in 1883. Most of the other aristocratic marriages of ladies connected with "the profession," including that of



THE DUEL IN "THE PRISONER OF ZENDA" (PROLOGUE).

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY J. BYRON, NEW YORK.

a gardener, or that the penultimate Earl of Caithness was a chartered accountant and branch-bank manager in Aberdeen prior to his accession to the empty honours. And it might have been mentioned also that the ninth Lord Belhaven was for many years a clerk in the service of an Edinburgh firm of wine merchants, and the late Earl of Seafield for some time a County Court bailiff in New Zealand. It will be observed that Sir Thomas Echlin has resigned his sergeantcy in the R.I.C., but it is not recorded if Sir Henry Wardlaw still carries on the business of a wheelwright in Tillicoultry. These are not serious omissions, but why not be equally communicative all round?

The name of "Viscount Hinton," without biographical detail, once more appears, but it is left to the judicially minded to decide whether the editor refers to the eminent organ-grinder or the male offspring of Earl Poulett by his third marriage. Without entering into discussion of a difficulty which will probably be fought out in the House of Lords, the writer is inclined, as a mere matter of betting, to put his money on Turnour Thomas William, the organ-grinder. The latter's history, if fully told, would point a moral without adorning this notice. His mother was the daughter of a Landport pilot, his father being then plain Captain Poulett, of the 22nd Regiment. He has been a pantomimist and female impersonator at the Surrey Theatre and Crystal Palace, and, as "Mr. Harry Dormar," a member of a touring dramatic company. A few years ago he deserted the provinces, and for some time

Lady Sholto Douglas, whose surname is incorrectly given, are duly recorded, but, for no apparent reason, the name of Miss Kate Vaughan, wife of Colonel Wellesley, does not appear in the list.

A word as to "Debrett's" statement of the claims of Lords Kingsale and Forester to remain unbonneted in presence of royalty. With regard to the first-named, it is perhaps advisable to avoid the thorny path of controversy, and simply record that, however doubtful its origin, the claim has been allowed at Court. Lord Forester's privilege is of much more recent date. As a matter of fact, it was granted to his ancestor, John Forester, in the time of Henry VIII., because this John was afflicted with a scalp-disease, which made it advisable that he should not uncover in the presence of the King, or, indeed, anybody else. This being the case, it is hardly probable Henry intended that Forester's whole-scalped descendants should exercise the same privilege.

In one particular instance "Debrett" decidedly scores. In the preface to the 1894 issue, it was contended that the Cromartie peerage was not extinct, but in abeyance. This statement, which was severely criticised at the time, has since been proved to be "fully accurate and amply justified." In the Knightage section of the work, it may be noted that, although the second marriage of Sir William MacGregor, Lieutenant-Governor of British New Guinea, is chronicled, the first has been omitted.

On the whole, however, the information is wonderfully well up-to-date, and the new "Debrett," if anything, more than maintains its ancient reputation for completeness, conciseness, and accuracy. J. F. G.

\* "Debrett's Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage, and Companionage." London: Dean and Son.

## THE LIGHT SIDE OF NATURE.



### LOCAL INFORMATION.

TOWN CRIER ; For sale, for sale, a kitchen table, belangin' to Mrs. Tosh, wha's leavin' the toon wi' fowr strong legs and a deal tap.





THE DOGS' CEMETERY.

THE PORTER: Ah, yes! we're getting very full-up here now, there's been a deal o' illness about, and a lot as has passed away. I'm just a-going to dig two fresh graves.



"THE MAID WAS IN THE GARDEN HANGING OUT THE CLOTHES."





A CHOICE OF EVILS.



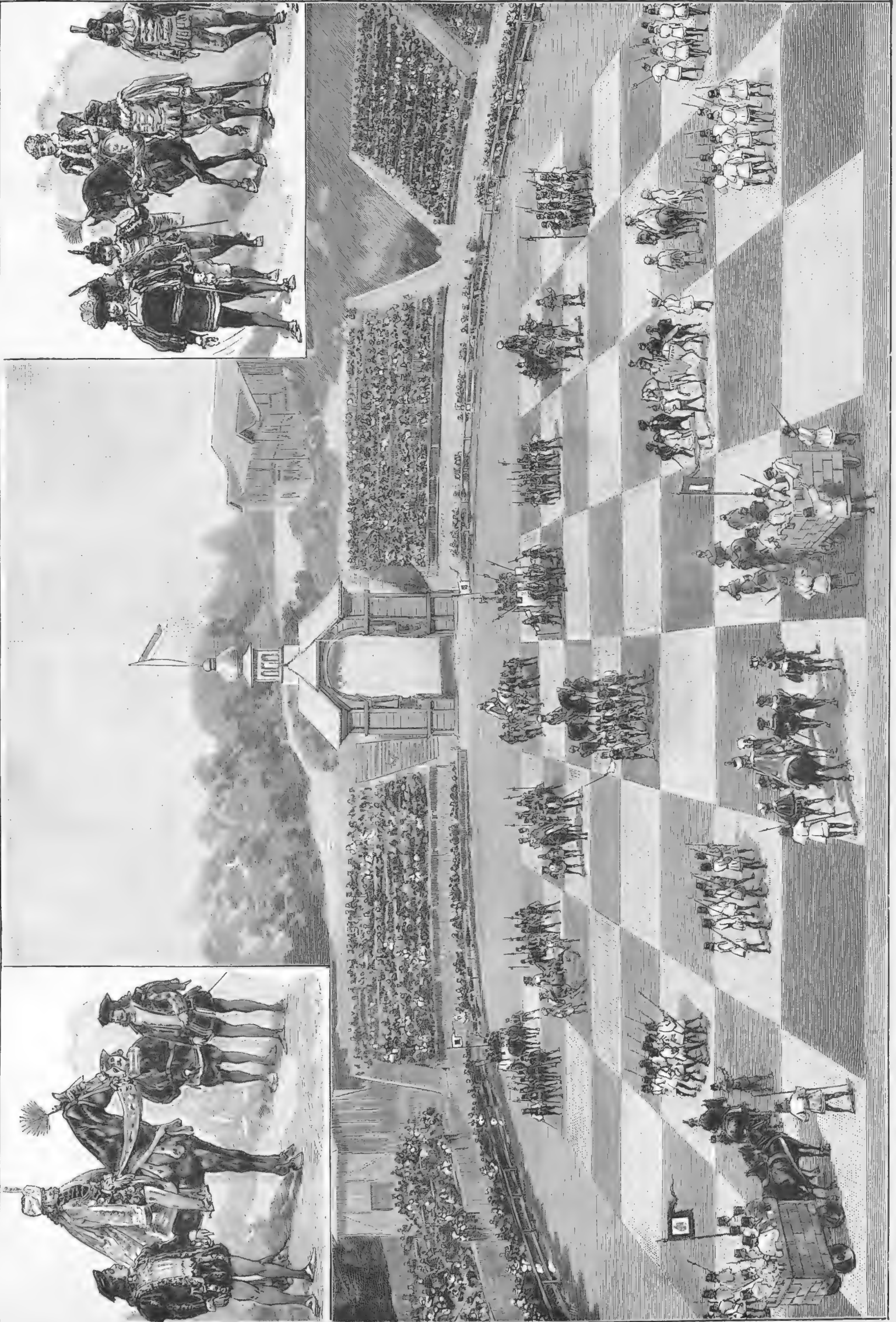
"ONE OF THE OLD SCHOOL."



THE BLACK QUEEN.



THE BLACK KING.



A LIVING GAME OF CHESS.

## HUMAN ODDS AND ENDS.

BY GEORGE GISSING.

## XII.—A PARENT'S FEELINGS.

Mrs. Snickers boasted that she had buried five children, and brought up five more to the age of independence—which, in Boundary Lane, signifies the thirteenth year. Her youngest, a girl of nine, was being prepared for life's responsibilities at a neighbouring Board School. Never having spared the rod, Mrs. Snickers kept an easy conscience with regard to those of her offspring who gave trouble in the outer world. In Boundary Lane, the "rod" was represented by a broom-handle, an old shoe, a rope-end, a fragment of firewood; in flagrant cases, perchance by the poker. An impertinent doctor, abetted by an officious coroner, had on one occasion caused Mrs. Snickers much pain and inconvenience by remarks upon the death of a child whom she had seen fit to chasten rather severely. It was a ridiculous case, for the mother gave clear evidence that the little girl had been weakly from birth, so how could *she* be to blame if the child succumbed after a well-merited thrashing? Sue, the latest born, had again and again endured much sterner correction; was there not the broken bridge of her nose for evidence? Mrs. Snickers always *did* feel sorry about that broken nose, which prejudiced her daughter's chances in life; but Sue had been "that aggravatin'," and as Mrs. Snickers happened to have a cold flat-iron in her hand—

At nine years old, Sue Snickers began to resent the humiliating discipline of school. She by no means deemed herself a child, and was proudly conscious of having learnt many things in the school of life which no professed teacher would ever have imparted to her. She grew daily more impatient for the time of release. Mrs. Snickers, a widow, and forsaken by her other surviving children, looked to the time when Sue's earnings would help to support them both; but the girl had views of her own, and was resolved that the last day of school should likewise be her last in the maternal lodging. London lay about her, with its infinite possibilities; not hers the spirit that could be bounded by Boundary Lane. The long memories of ill-usage rankled in her mind. She hated her mother, and always spoke of her away from home by a very foul name. More than once, of late, she had threatened a suitable revenge for that injury to her face and her fortune. Mrs. Snickers, though still a sturdy woman, did not altogether like the gleam in Sue's eye when she felt it necessary to "pay" the girl. Sue had discovered a rather effective mode of kicking. Her boots being worn out at the toes, she used the heel, and had even inserted nails in that part to make a more durable impression.

One of the school-teachers was a young woman named Martin; by nature kind, earnest, persevering, not exactly fond of her work in this roughest and vilest of London schools, but resolute to do her duty, and rewarded with a certain measure of success in subduing those children who were by any permitted method subduable. It was impossible for Miss Martin to look upon Sue Snickers as a hopeful subject; she knew the girl to be corrupt, and a source of corruption; the efforts of gentleness were to Sue a mere occasion of mockery, and stern treatment had just as little effect upon the child's indurated feelings. Knowing Sue to be a creature of hateful circumstances, the teacher made every allowance for her vicious and insubordinate habits. But it came to pass one day that Miss Martin lost patience, and, for discipline's sake, determined to make an example of Sue, who had behaved outrageously. The cane was brought forth, and Sue, not daring to resist, received one smart cut on each hand.

"Jist wait, that's all," muttered Sue, when she had returned to her place, howling. "Jist wait and see, that's all." And, for the amusement of her neighbours, she exhausted a copious vocabulary in whispered abuse of Miss Martin.

Released at midday, the girl reached Boundary Lane in a few minutes.

"Mother! Teacher's been beatin' me fair cruel—sure as I stand 'ere—with the cane!" She howled and writhed. "I ain't a-going to be licked by *her*. Jist look at my 'ands, they're fair blistered."

Mrs. Snickers had just come from the public-house, where a misunderstanding with one of her neighbours in the Lane had occupied her for two or three hours. She was flushed, and in a state of nervous tension.

"Eh! What? Beatin' my child? You come along wi' me. I'll show the —."

Hastening away, with volleys of furious and filthy invective, she encountered Mrs. Dubbin, the neighbour with whom she had been quarrelling. At once all unkindness was forgotten.

"'Ear what my Sue says? The teacher's been thrashin' her that cruel she can't hardly stand. I'll show the —"

In Mrs. Dubbin's eyes there straightway gleamed a sympathetic wrath.

"Well! Did you ever! It's time this kind o' thing was put a stop to. I'll come along, an' back you up—s'elp me, I will. We'll show 'em! Think they're goin' to wallop our children? Why, if the — lays a 'and on one o' mine, I'll cut her — liver out!"

With a triumphant yell, Sue ran behind the two women. Other children, scenting sport, turned eagerly back towards the school. As Mrs. Snickers and Mrs. Dubbin ran through the playground, they were accompanied and guided by an uproarious throng.

"Where is she? Let me git at her! Where's the — as thrashed my child, my Sue?"

Miss Martin was easily discovered; she stood in one of the school-rooms, talking with another teacher. "That's her, mother!" shrieked

Sue. "Her with the dirty red 'ead!" Before the teachers could understand what was happening, Mrs. Snickers had rushed forward, had seized Miss Martin by the hair, and was avenging Sue with interest. "I'll pay you, you red-headed —! I'll pay you! I'll teach you to lay your dirty 'and on a child o' mine, as has been brought up better than ever you was!" The children, led by Sue, shrieked their amusement and approval.

The second teacher had sped for help. She soon returned with the headmaster of the school, a stalwart man, not unused to scenes of this description. He, when he had gripped the yelling fury by the arms, found himself savagely attacked from the rear, his assailant Mrs. Dubbin. In a minute or two the blood was streaming down his cheeks; he had no choice but to fight the two women in earnest, flinging one to the ground, and making the second reel away with a back-hander on the face. When another male teacher came to his assistance, they succeeded, though with no little difficulty, in driving the women off the premises. Poor Miss Martin had been sadly mauled; she sat on the floor, sobbing hysterically. A handful of her hair lay not far off.

A day or two after, Mrs. Snickers and Mrs. Dubbin appeared at the police-court, where, after a vigorous defence by counsel, who dwelt much upon the sacredness of parental feeling, each was fined the sum of five shillings and costs. In anticipation of this judgment, the money had already been subscribed by sympathetic parents in and about Boundary Lane. And that evening, when she came home very late from the public-house, Mrs. Snickers, merely to give vent to her emotions, dragged Sue out of bed and thrashed her unmercifully.

"I'll pay you, my lady! I'll teach you to get your mother summonsed! I'll —"

## AN EXTRAORDINARY CHESS PAGEANT.

At the Bohemian-Slavonic Ethnographic Exhibition in Prague, an unprecedented pageant was recently witnessed, in the form of a game of chess. The game was played in an arena 2304 square metres in extent, marked out as a colossal chess-board. We owe the original idea to the secretary of the Bohemian Chess Club, Franz Moùcka, who also directed the performance. The game was arranged by Dr. Johann Dobruský, the famous chess-master. The first performance was ushered in by a historical procession. The *motif* of the game was the defeat of the Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus by King Georg Podjebrad. Each piece was represented by a group of figures. Pawns took their stations as halberdiers, in proper historical costume. The knights, on gorgeously caparisoned horses, were attended by squires in gay attire. Battlemented waggons, representing the castles, bore the banners and standards of the rival kings. The bishops were also mounted, and accompanied by a group of archers. The royal pieces, with their retinues, were dressed in appropriate historical costume, portrait-masks being worn by the kings. At the call of the trumpet, the rival armies opposed each other in battle-array. Before the commencement of the contest, however, there was sounded the ancient Bohemian battle-call, "Svatý Václav!" and, as its notes died away, the issue was joined. The Hungarians, represented by the black pieces, quickly developed their attack, forcing their opponents to adopt defensive tactics. The meeting of any of the groups in the course of the play was always the occasion of a hand-to-hand conflict. This game was concluded in sixteen moves. The serious work of the day was now entered upon, in the form of a representation of the battle of Vilemov. To martial music composed by K. Pospisil, the groups manœuvred on the colossal board. The Hungarian king was soon placed at a disadvantage, and, by the twenty-fifth move, his position was dangerous. Unable to regain a strong position, he was mated in the thirty-second move. Amid loud applause from the spectators, the Hungarian yielded his sword to the conqueror, and the day's tournament was brought to a conclusion by the singing of an ancient Hungarian pæan. The evolutions of the two hundred and fifty-six combatants were followed with great interest by the spectators.

## THE OLD WAY WITH THE NEW WOMAN.

She is beautiful, stately, and tall,  
With reposeful and elegant airs;  
You may not believe it, but yet, all the same,  
She's the girl that I kissed on the stairs.  
She's college-bred, witty, and wise,  
And a red-sealed diploma she bears;  
But that didn't count when we sat, at the dance,  
In the twilight that shrouded the stairs.  
She is studying Latin and Law;  
She is tracking old crimes to their lairs—  
Which is all very well while she doesn't forget  
Who kissed her, last night, on the stairs.  
She's a woman that's newer than new;  
She everything ventures and dares;  
She'd preside at a club in a bicycle suit,  
And she'd sit out a dance on the stairs.  
Do you think I'm afraid? Not a whit!  
I shan't kick at the costume she wears—  
I have coaxed her to try orange blossoms and white—  
And she promised—last night on the stairs.—Puck.



## THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

It is with acknowledged diffidence that Mr. Blackmore in "Fringilla" (London: Elkin Mathews) has given the pipings of "this little finch" to the world, and it is with equal diffidence that the critic approaches the songs, for the author of "Lorna Doone" has in the past taught us to expect so much, and has so faithfully fulfilled our expectations, that it is impossible to consider anything he may write with a mind entirely free. Nor does the fact that at present we are dealing with verse help us out of the difficulty, for so hard is it to forget what Mr. Blackmore can accomplish in prose that it is almost impossible to pronounce a fair verdict upon his poetry. Indeed, the task of criticising these tales in verse is

Theresa Joyce and her long unhappy love, and Mr. Polymathers and Con the Quare One might almost have come from Thrums. The Irish idyllist is, indeed, far nearer Mr. Barrie than any of his Scotch compeers. "Strangers at Lisconnel" is a book that will live.

It is a genuine pleasure to see a wanderer return to the fold. Mrs. Walford began well, very well. "Mr. Smith" is a fine bit of work. And many good books have succeeded it, in spite of all their faults. Yet there has been distinct deterioration, and the old vein has been rarely struck. But her last book, "Frederick" (Smith, Elder, and Co.), is excellent. It is a study of an amiable, commonplace man who had no business in life but that of doing little kindnesses. He is contrasted with a sharp London lawyer, whose rudeness is surely exaggerated. The supreme judge, of course, is a young lady who decides for "Frederick." There are many pleasant episodes in the book, and some valuable advice to the bald.

A good many of the poems in Stevenson's "Songs of Travel, and Other Verses," now included in the Poetry Volume of the Edinburgh Edition, appeared in various periodicals shortly after his death. But not all the best. For instance, the Heinesque one, "The Infinite Shining Heavens," did not, I think, with its beautiful ending—

And the idle stars of the night  
Were dearer to me than bread.

Night after night in my sorrow  
The stars stood over the sea,  
Till lo! I looked in the dusk,  
And a star had come down to me.

Nor had the inspiring "Vagabond Song"—

Give to me the life I love,  
Let the lave go by me,

been heard before. The Travel Songs, indeed, are the best of those that are really new, for when he sang in this solemn strain—

Let now your soul in this substantial world  
Some anchor strike,

he was, perhaps, only trying to sing himself into a mood he had not quite arrived at. These poems were meant by him to form an addition to "Underwood." Surely they will soon be given to his lovers in a more accessible form than the Edinburgh Edition! It is not for the mere completeness of our libraries they are desirable. Trivial some of them are, others are fragmentary or experimental; but all are charming.

Mr. Henley's "London Garland" (Macmillan) has had many things in its favour. The pictures by members of the Society of Illustrators are representative of quite the best illustrative art of the day of every school. Mr. Abbey, Mr. Pennell, Mr. Walter Crane, Mr. Raven Hill, Mr. Aubrey Beardsley, and Mr. Vicat Cole are among the artists, and their names give some idea of the variety of the point of view of the methods. Yet there is no inharmonious clashing, only a suggestion of the endless difference to be found in the city they celebrate. The poetical part is admirable, and Londoners may be pleasantly surprised to find that their city has inspired so many romantic lovers—from Chaucer, whose "London Prentice" opens the volume, to Mr. Henley, whose grim picture of

The wind-fiend, the insufferable,  
Thus vicious and thus patient sits him down  
To the black job of burking London Town.

To its great chances in the way of editor and illustrators must be added the publishers' excellent taste in the matters of type and size and binding. One hopes that London may prove itself patriotic over this book, that celebrates its glories and its charms, and gives to its very fogs a picturesque distinction.

The school-boy has found his poet in Mr. C. E. Johnstone, who, I gather from his "Ballads of Boy and Beak" (Lane), is a schoolmaster. At least, he seems more than a mere verse-writer who once was young. His ideal youngster is not ideal at all, but a rough barbarian frankly ready for hostility, though capable of being won over to friendship with the powers that be. But, in a moment of expansion, Mr. Johnstone hails the establishment of a new brotherhood—

In the dust of a kindlier age  
Lies the tomahawk buried for ever;  
And no more shall hostility rage  
'Twixt the taught and the tutor.

This is a trifle premature, and probably will remain so till the Millennium. The little book is issued, in dainty style, from the Bodley Head. o. o.



ADAM AND EVE.

From "Fringilla." By R. D. Blackmore.

one that is best left to the individual reader. In this way the most favourable verdict will be arrived at, for Mr. Blackmore has friends innumerable. The first poem, "To my Pen," dated 1854, will be read with considerable interest by those whom that pen has delighted since the days when the lines were written. It would be of further interest, however, to know whether the doubts of future achievement refer to verse or prose. The illustrations are by Fairfax Muckley and J. W. R. Linton. Of Mr. Muckley's striking work, a specimen is given here in the shape of an illustration to "Kadisha," a legend of the first jealousy. At these "trimmings," as at his own, Mr. Blackmore "gazes with doubt."

In her "Strangers at Lisconnel" (Hodder and Stoughton), Miss Jane Barlow has recovered herself, and has produced a book quite on a level with "Irish Idylls." It may even be thought that she has, in some respects, made an advance, though the freshness and the first impression cannot be expected in a sequel. There is plenty of pathos in "Strangers at Lisconnel"—not of the intolerable kind, but very true and quiet. Mr. Barrie himself might be proud of some touches in the story of

## BEHIND THE SCENES.

## II.—THE EMPIRE.

Outside the house the average passer-by would have believed with me that he was in London on a miserable November night. The rain was falling heavily, the wind was sighing and moaning as though it had backed the favourite for the Manchester November Handicap, which

had been won by an outsider a few hours before. But, after passing through the lounge, greeting Messrs. Hitchins and Slater in the managerial office, and reaching the stage, it was apparent that I had been mistaken. We were not in London—we were on Brighton Pier; and it was not a wet night, but a fine day. There were nursemaids by the dozen enjoying the ozone, and my first note was to ask several of them to say when they took their Sunday out. Then our artist destroyed an illusion by pointing out that most of the sunshine was supplied by a gentleman who sat up aloft attending to the limelight, and suggesting that it would make a good picture. He began to sketch, and presently several people came under the shadow of the lights, as though to fill in the picture.



MR. SLATER AND MR. HITCHINS.

By the various bells that warn the scene-shifters and dressing-rooms stood George Capel, stage-manager, looking towards the Pier as though piers did not interest him, ever and anon giving some decisive instruction that kept the huge mechanism under his control in working order. Presently one or two real sea-nymphs, mermaids, and sirens crept down to the corner waiting for their turn. How aggravating it seemed that, throughout all the times I have been on Brighton Pier, I should never have seen fairies there before. While reflecting on the ill luck, a whistle sounded, there was a rush of nymphs and sirens to the back of the stage, the lights went down, and Brighton Pier was left to the care of pretty Ada Vincent, who straightway fell asleep. Then all the fairies and dwellers in the deep sea came to weave spells round the sleeping girl, Mdle. Edith Slack danced a *pas de fascination*, and clever May Paston, dressed as a boy, came to speak in dumb show, and numerous coryphées—who had, a moment before, been discussing the weather and other things by the side of the stage—went round the Pier on the tips of their toes; but, as they could not rouse the sleeper, they all disappeared, scampering off so noisily to change that Miss Vincent woke up. As soon as



A BUSY CORNER.

she looked round, the mysterious green light disappeared; the lamps were lighted, and I saw the illuminations in the hotels over on Brighton Front, and, in sentimental mood, wondered what the dinner menu was at the two principal houses. It was the moment of one of the quickest changes

of the evening, for, after a *pas de quatre* and some pantomime, the some-while dwellers in the deep sea were due at a dance given on the Pier by somebody in honour of something. They came down in time, panting with exertion, arranging ties, gloves, and waistcoat-buttons, and went to the dance without inviting the artist or me. We both felt very disappointed, for there were several ladies whom we would gladly have claimed as partners. They went through a pretty waltz, then a gallop, and then the music stopped and the curtain fell, so they stopped dancing and hurried away, no man knows whither. The ballet was over, and I felt very sorry. I only find one flaw in the production—or rather, with one set of costumes in it. As I have said, the girls dress as boys in the last tableau. Now, why will girls who dress as boys always wear girls' corsets and put on bracelets and rings *ad nauseam*?

As all the girls had gone, I thought a tour of inspection would not be out of place, so, under the guidance of Mr. Bluer, the assistant stage-



ANGELS GOING ALOFT.

manager, we went round the stage, where preparations for "Faust" were already in progress. The shifters and stage-carpenters have a tremendous duty on the Empire stage, as may be guessed when one learns that more than sixty stage-hands are employed. The scenery is heavy and vast, the changes are quick and numerous, while the least mistake would result in a confusion that might even involve serious accidents to life and limb. There is not much risk, however, for the Empire is one of the best-managed houses I have ever met in England or on the Continent, and the work goes smoothly and regularly, every man knowing and doing his individual duty.

We went downstairs to the staff bar, and found the dressers getting all sorts and conditions of things for the ladies of the ballet, who are not allowed out of their dressing-rooms between the two performances. This rule, strict though it appears, must do a good deal towards the maintenance of order and decorum that make the stage a model of what a stage should be.



Back to the wings again, just in time to meet Madame Katti Lanner, heroine of countless ballets, producer of "Katrina," "Orfeo," and the rest of the triumphs. Madame tells us about the forthcoming ballet, one of her many successes. Miss Alice Atherton, who has fairly "brought down" the crowded house, joins our party for a moment, and we watch some variety "turn," while the work around us redoubles, for the hour of "Faust" approaches.

The name of Mr. Sims Reeves goes up on the number-frames, and is hailed from the front with loud applause. The veteran tenor comes from the room reserved for him by the side of the stage, and tells me how pleased he is with the attention and appreciation that have attended his efforts. As he sings, the stage-hands pause at their work to listen; the first groups of girls who have come down for "Faust" hush their conversation; the spell of the great singer is cast over the stage as well as the auditorium, and some of the final applause comes from the wings. Even Mr. Capel, the rigid disciplinarian, does not comment on the cessation of work, and does nothing to check the spontaneous applause.

When Mr. Sims Reeves had left the stage, I found a curious company in the wings. The old-world Nuremberg and the latter-day London were indiscriminately mixed up. There were students, peasants, vivandières, and children side-by-side with the carpenters, shifters, and dressers of the present prosaic age. There were John Ridley, the clever actor who made such a success as the parson in "Round the Town"; Will Bishop, made up as a man-eating soldier; pretty Misses Milton and Sheppard, in the costume of standard-bearers; and many others whom to see is to admire. Madame Cavallazzi, as old Faust, was on the "O.P." side, as was Madame Zanfretta, the Mephistopheles, while Marguerite and Valentine were talking together by the side of some stately soldiers. In the meantime our artist was hard at work transferring pretty faces to his sketch-book, and making me wish that I had learned to draw. He had been making valiant efforts to draw the directors, but they are exceedingly modest men, and refused to be drawn.

When "Faust" commenced, the scene by the side was curious in the extreme. Colours and costumes were blended in picturesque confusion, and, as the stage was in semi-darkness, the strong masked lights threw shadows against columns, or scattered them upon the ground. The hurry and bustle suggested an ant-hill, when the ants have been disturbed. Every few minutes half-a-dozen pretty girls would rush off to their dressing-rooms to change, leaving me heart-broken, while another contingent would arrive in fresh costume, as though to console me. They would be for a few moments laughing and joking, and then, as their turn came, step on to the stage, and dance, march, or act with the ease

goblets, and the other impedimenta of the ballet were being handed to those entrusted with them, and, as the girls came from the stage, were carefully put back in their respective places. No sooner was the first tableau over than preparations for the last commenced right at the back of the stage, where the final heavenly transformation-scene stands permanently. The long ladder leading to heaven was occupied by angels holding their flowing robes well above their ankles, and showing symptoms of black stockings. In spite of noise, dust, and scarcity of elbow-room, the wings were quite good enough for me, and I made a note to ask to be allowed to under-study the stage-manager. In fact, I told several fairies of my intention, and when they heard that my first step would be to abolish fines and grant holidays to all who wanted them, there was no vehement opposition to my proposal.

A deafening crash, followed by a general stampede from the stage, announced the final tableau, and, with the sweet, full notes of the organ echoing over the stage, the curtain fell. No sooner had it dropped than the angels ran down the golden stairs as though for a wager, wings and crowns were discarded, and left for the dressers to pick up, and the angels, together with such inhabitants of Hades as were left on the premises, became a crowd of noisy girls again.

I left the stage trying hard to think of a reasonable pretext for a second visit.

S. L. B.



MADAME CAVALLAZZI AS FAUST.

#### AN EARTHY PARADISE.

A crystal stair, and in the air  
The angels hover round,  
With tapering wings; their presence brings  
A sense of peace profound.  
The music rises soft and low  
The while they soar aloft, as though  
They ne'er had touched the ground.

There's Marguerite, and at her feet  
Poor Faust repentant lies,  
While, far above, each angel-love  
Looks down with pitying eyes.  
So innocent and pink each elf,  
That one would almost think oneself  
Transported to the skies.

It's hard to climb at any time,  
For Heaven is, oh, so high!  
And then the road is never broad,  
It often makes one sigh.  
Behind the scenes, so steep the stairs  
The angels cannot keep in pairs  
In mounting to the sky.

Nor long they soar, it soon is o'er,  
The curtain tumbles down;  
And in a trice the paradise  
Has vanished—harp and crown;  
No more the angels deck the sky—  
Those angels hail from Peckham Rye,  
From Bow or Kentish Town.

J. M. B.



THE "O.P." SIDE OF THE EMPIRE.

and grace that distinguish the pupils of Madame Lanner. The great *maitresse de ballet* sat in her seat on the prompt side, and directed every movement with an interest and energy that never flagged; while Mr. Capel, standing at her side, looked on with an expression in which enthusiasm played no part. In the property-room, standards, pikes,

## A VISIT TO A FAMOUS GUNMAKER'S.

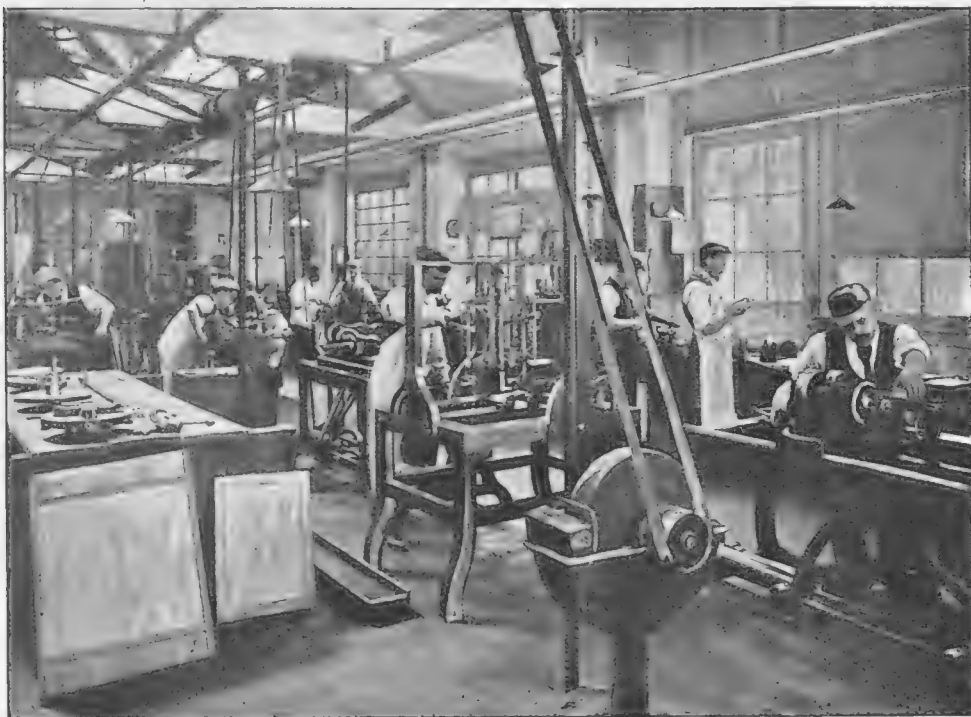
"I am going," said my friend, "to have my gun fitted to me."

"Have your gun fitted to you? I remember a man in a play who was going out to be measured for an umbrella, but a gun!"

"Come along," he replied, "and you shall see."

We went to Victoria, and, a little way from the station, arrived at the factory of Messrs. Cogswell and Harrison. We walked through a formidable gate, put out cigars, to comply with an imperative notice, and entered a building that looked like a galvanised iron church; it was lined with felt, to deaden the noise, and very lofty; at the end were large white discs. Then was produced a weird-looking gun, with a stock in several pieces, kept together by adjustable screws and aluminium fittings, and my friend began shooting at flying pitch discs which represented pigeons, and, after each shot, the screws were tightened or loosened, till at length the weapon exactly fitted his reach and mode of firing. A great deal was said to me about too much or too little "cast-off," straightness of stock, &c., which, seeing that my study of ballistics never went beyond catapults and bows and arrows, I did not understand.

After this my friend declared that he wished to test the accuracy of the rifle just made for him by the firm, so we were taken to "the tunnel." To my surprise, I found that there was a one-hundred-yard range on the premises, underground, lighted by electricity, and aerated by a large fan; while there was an ingenious apparatus, invented by Mr. Edgar Harrison, for levelling the rifle with absolute accuracy. At forty, fifty, and one hundred yards, the weapon fired with appalling correctness.



THE MACHINE-ROOM.

"Of course," said our guide, "you can go to our ranges at Harrow for open-air test; but you can't test the absolute accuracy so well there as here."

"I presume you are makers, not merely dealers and repairers?"

"Come through the works, and you will see." I was punished by getting tired of walking from one large department to another, watching the numerous operations. Some matters seemed to me decidedly interesting. Everyone has heard of the choke-bore—of the idea of slightly narrowing the bore close to the muzzle, so as to keep the shot together, and produce a more deadly result. The narrowing is small, full-choke being only one-thirty-thousandth of an inch in a 12-bore gun, and, of course, has to be done very nicely. I found, to my surprise, that paper plays an important part in the operation. The boring is done with a square-edged rod of tempered steel, with a wooden slot as backing. Between the steel and wood are inserted slips of fine oiled paper, increasing by infinitesimal degrees the diameter of the borer and calibre of the bore.

One feature struck me greatly. A huge mass of finely finished machinery has been put up, with the object of making all the parts of the complicated action interchangeable. Mr. Edgar Harrison's patent cartridge-ejecting mechanism, combined with the most approved system of breech-closing and locking devices and the ordinary gun-lock movements, appears to a novice to be almost as complicated as that of a watch, although, looking at the whole mechanism and movements from a gun-maker's point of view, the very reverse is the case. However, it is essential that the greatest accuracy of work and greatest strength should be obtained in a fine modern gun. By means of the new machinery, not only will the firm be able to turn out more guns per week than before; but, in the case of an injury to a gun, they can send to the owner a counterpart of the damaged bolt, screw, hammer, plate, &c., which can be fitted by any amateur. I am glad to learn, however, that this

machinery will not cause the discharge of any of the hundred and twenty men and thirty girls engaged in the works.

The gun-stocks interested me, for, to my surprise, walnut is the only wood used. It has beauty, hardness, durability, and, above all, straightness of grain, and no wood, not even the oak, can vie with it. In fact, save in the guns manufactured—but not by such firms as Messrs. Cogswell and Harrison—for savages, walnut is invariably used; the savages get beech, and barrels like gas-pipes, and the safest place when the gun goes off is about fifty yards in front of the muzzle. The variation in quality of the walnut is so extraordinary that the rough stocks cost from four shillings each up to four pounds.

This led me to the question of the cost of a sporting shot-gun. Fifty guineas cash is the price of one which represents all that the gun-maker's art can do to make a gun as perfect as the present state of science can suggest, and it is doubtful whether the science has not reached its limits. Indeed, when I looked at one of their "Avant-Touts," and handled the piece, and saw how rapid and smooth is the working, it seemed impossible that any further improvement of value is still to be made. Of course, this price covers highest finish and finest stock, &c., and for less than half the price a weapon of excellent quality can be bought either at their establishment in the Strand or Bond Street.

Of course, cartridges are a vital point, and, in consequence, in order to see that the quality is constant, there was an interesting laboratory, with an electric chronograph, so that tests of velocity, lowness of trajectory, breech-pressure, and recoil, can be made, and nothing left to chance. When upon the cartridge and rifle depends life or death, one is content to feel that there is no element of doubt as to quality.

I cannot pretend to describe the sporting-rifles, the manufacture of artificial pigeons and swiftsure traps, or the hundred-and-one other interesting things that came under my notice while I wandered, upstairs and downstairs, about the buildings that constitute the remarkable factory from which come guns and rifles whose quality has made the name of Cogswell and Harrison a household word with sportsmen.

## TWO MILITARY MELODRAMAS.

With the screech of the American Eagle and the trouble in Ashanti, Tommy Atkins may be said to be distinctly in evidence, and it is, therefore, appropriate enough that plays built round him should be running in two West-End London theatres at the same time. At the Adelphi we have "One of the Best," by Mr. Seymour Hicks and Mr. George Edwardes; at the Duke of York's, "Tommy Atkins," by Mr. Arthur Shirley and Mr. Landeck, has been put on—apparently on the basis of its success at the Pavilion Theatre. In the circumstances, comparison is unavoidable. Melodrama is always more or less old-fashioned, but there are degrees in antiquity. Let it be said at once that "One of the Best" not only outstrips its rival, but is one of the most moving pictures of military life and one of the most interesting melodramas that the Messrs. Gatti have staged for many years. The plot itself is essentially military. It turns upon an incident reminiscent of the degradation of Captain Dreyfus. A young officer in a Highland regiment is wrongly accused of having given away the secrets of national defence, of which he is guiltless. The idea has evidently been suggested by the Dreyfus affair, and though in English garb it is not particularly probable, it is a welcome interlude in the tiresome series of stories of seduced heroines who drag through a dreary existence in a funeral costume. If you go to the Duke of York's you will find the best of these primitive traditions in full bloom. There, Tommy Atkins is not the head and front of the story. We simply get another version of the old tale of the wronged woman and the wicked deceiver—an impossible villain, of course. All this sort of nonsense is avoided at the Adelphi. Not only so, but the authors have actually made the wronged woman, Miss Millward, a "wrong 'un" of the deepest dye, who ought to be placed on the pillory with the villain, Mr. Abingdon, even although the gallery, in view of Miss Millward's past sufferings, cheers the lady as the curtain falls. I do not remember ever having seen a military crowd of more picturesque and more realistic appearance than the 2nd Highlanders at the Adelphi, and their picturesqueness makes me forget any other faults in the play. The acting, as a whole, is admirable; Mr. Terriss has rarely appeared to more advantage. He looks well and he acts well. Mr. Fulton is capital as General Coventry, and Mr. Sass as Sir Archibald MacGregor, A.D.C. Mr. Nicholls, as the comic Private Jupp, is exceedingly funny from first to last. The minor parts are unusually well played. Mr. Athol Forde gives an excellent piece of character-acting as the toothless village grave-digger; Mr. Delorme, as the foreign spy, shows us how a Frenchman really speaks English; and Mr. A. W. Fitzgerald, as a bullying Highland sergeant, presents a picture startlingly lifelike. "One of the Best" is something to be seen. He indeed must be a very blasé man who would be bored. But I was bored at the Duke of York's. One was tempted only to laugh at the heroine and sympathise with her representative, Miss Gertrude Kingston. The hero, Curate Wilson (Mr. Cartwright) is lugubrious, and the villain (Mr. O'Neill) is villainous for anything short of the Surrey side.



## RACING NOTES BY CAPTAIN COE.

The race for the Grand National of '96 should be a good one. Cloister is not likely to spoil the handicap this time. I suppose Cathal will be given a big weight for having finished second last spring, and Van der Berg—a useful chaser, by-the-bye—is likely to have seven pounds more to carry this time. March Hare, who is now six years old, may get the course safely, the same remark applying to Moriarty. Messrs. Widger will, no doubt, rely on Miss Anthony. Other probable runners are: Field-Marshal, Father O'Flynn, The Jew, Marcellus, Royal Red, Æsop, and many more. If the course is not too holding, the distance should be covered in good time, as many of the probable competitors can sprint, though the slow sort, of the stamp of Gamecock, have the best average over long steeplechase courses.

One of the most popular among the many cross-country jockeys is George Mawson, who rides all Tom Cannon's jumpers in their races. Mawson was born in London on July 27, 1865, and he was, in due



G. MAWSON.  
Photo by Sherborn, Newmarket.

course, apprenticed to Tom Cannon, and served in that capacity with J. Watts. Unfortunately, Mawson put on too much flesh to be able to ride on the flat, and he turned his attention to the jumpers. His first big win was on Priestcraft gelding in the Criterion Steeplechase at Sandown, but the pinnacle of fame was reached when he won the Grand National, in 1888, on Playfair, following this up by winning the big race at Auteuil the same year. Mawson has won all the chief hurdle-races and steeplechases in England since that date, and many of them, be it added, on very unreliable, not to say unsound, animals. He is a resolute horseman, displaying all the time the best of judgment;

but he is something more—a real masterpiece, in fact, at coaxing a rogue into doing his best. I have always contended that the jockey who rides in races should ride the horses in their home-gallops. Mawson adopts this plan, and it has certainly answered well up to now, so far as the Stockbridge horses are concerned.

It is hardly possible for a judge's eyes to deceive him, except in very exceptional cases—say, for instance, when he is judging one of his own handicaps. At the same time, many finishes during a season are desperately close, and the verdict would be often given, "short nose," instead of "short head," if the former term were permissible. I have often thought it would be possible to use the cotton, as is done at all athletic meetings. There would then be no question about which horse had won, and the judge's work would be lessened. True, all horses are not of the one height, so that two or three lengths of cotton would be required, but there would be no doubt that the horse breaking the cotton first would be the winner.

If the majority of the jockeys received only five guineas for a winning mount, and three guineas for a losing one, they would not be able to pay travelling expenses and hotel bills, to say nothing of keeping up fine establishments at Newmarket. The jockeys, or many of them who have not large retainers, rely on presents to bring them in large incomes. True, many of the good horsemen earn a big sum by riding in trials; but when it is currently reported that two jockeys, who have not ridden one hundred and fifty winners between them this year, are worth together nearly £100,000, it is pretty well certain these two have done well in the matter of presents, and it may be that both of them have been put on £250 to nothing not once, but often.

I have just finished reading three books of interest to those who want to know how sport is managed abroad. "On and Off the Turf in Australia," by Nat Gould, deals fully with racing in Australia, which is, apparently, as well or better managed than it is in England. I find, by-the-bye, that a son of Mr. S. H. Hyde, of Kempton Park, is secretary of one of the chief racing-clubs in Australia. "Horse-Racing in France," by Mr. Andrew Black, is a true history of the French Jockey Club—which started only in the 'thirties—and of racing in France for the last century. "Men and Horses," by Captain Hayes, contains a plethora of interesting incidents; but I sought to complete my education about racing carried on all over the world (I have engaged in it in America), and I found most interesting descriptions of the sport as it takes place in India, South Africa, Japan, and even China. With all due respect to the several authors, I fancy English racing will take some beating.

## HORS D'ŒUVRES.

Events move quickly nowadays, and it is possible that before the New Year opens the menacing cloud drawn together by the mad Message of President Cleveland will be dissipated, with no more serious result than a staggering shock to the financial credit of the United States and a feeling of angry self-disgust on one side of the Atlantic and of resentful amazement on the other. But good will have come out of evil if this sudden alarm has shown both nations whither they are drifting, and what are the probable results of the attitudes that they respectively have taken up.

The relations between the United States and Great Britain are, and must be, many and complex. Though many incongruous elements have been fused—in some cases, rather imperfectly—into the American population, yet the backbone of the nation is still of Anglo-Saxon stock. In fact, the community of thought and method of looking at matters—the general similarity of mental type—is greater between Americans and English than it was between North and South in the great Civil War. This does not involve agreement on any particular point; it only means that, as a rule, the Englishman and the American are more like each other than either is to a member of any other great nation.

But this very likeness of temperament makes quarrels between the two States more frequent and more violent in expression, just as the kinship between Federals and Confederates made their battles beyond example murderous and indecisive. The children of a large family, the boys of a big school, will quarrel with each other on petty pretexts, will use and tolerate language that they would not dare to employ nor stoop to endure with an outsider. This is the case largely because all the members of family or school know that their common blood and interests will suffice to bring them back into friendliness. Two schoolboys may never have met for weeks without squabbling; but they will help each other with all their powers to win a victory at cricket or football.

But while the kinship between England and the United States accounts for and in part excuses the freedom of criticism, and even of abuse, in which both nations have at times indulged, the fact that the two States are independent, and in some of their interests opposed, makes this violence of expression dangerous. The language used against England by American journals and politicians is often extravagantly hostile; but so is that habitually used by French journals and politicians of the irresponsible kind. From France we take such language largely as a compliment to our success. To be powerful is to be envied. But a message from President Faure such as has emanated from Mr. Cleveland would mean that France had resolved on war, and that no honourable concession would or could avert the conflict. And if Cleveland's threat had been made to France—say over her frontier dispute with Brazil, in which she has taken stronger measures than England ever did with Venezuela—French ships would by now have been getting ready to try conclusions with the new American Navy.

It may be the case that some politicians and papers of the United States will continue to pelt England with pointless abuse. The stuff does not carry across the Atlantic, and injures no one but the fools who believe it. But it is the duty of all honest and patriotic citizens of America to put a stop to these periodical displays of bad manners on the part of the Government of the United States towards England, and to insist that the ordinary decencies of diplomatic intercourse shall be observed in the international correspondence and public acts of that Government. For President Cleveland could have done all that he has really done without arousing a single protest. He had only to state that Great Britain and Venezuela were unfortunately unable to agree as to the basis of arbitration; that both advanced specious claims, and that either might turn out in the right on some points; that it was to the interests of the United States to settle the dispute, and that he proposed therefore to appoint a Commission to inquire into the rights of the case, intending to base the policy of the United States on the report of the Commission. He could then have asked England and Venezuela to communicate the evidence on which they respectively based their claims, and neither could have refused the friendly request. Then, although in form a mere departmental inquiry, the Commission would have, in substance, become a sort of arbitration; and unless its conclusions were manifestly and grossly unjust, the side that refused to abide by its decision would have incurred general disapproval.

That is what President Cleveland could have done, and should have done. He would have appeased all legitimate anxieties on the part of his country, and he would have avoided ruffling an English susceptibility.

MARMITON.

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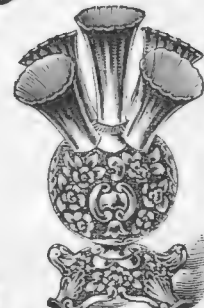


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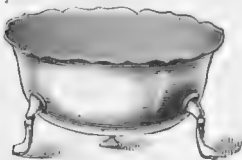
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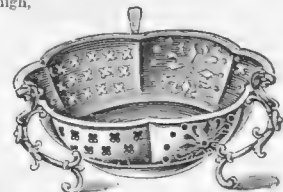
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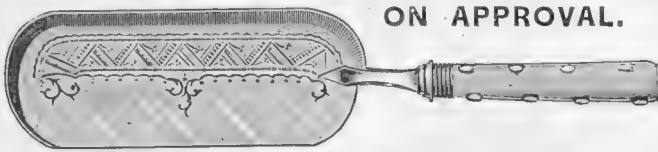
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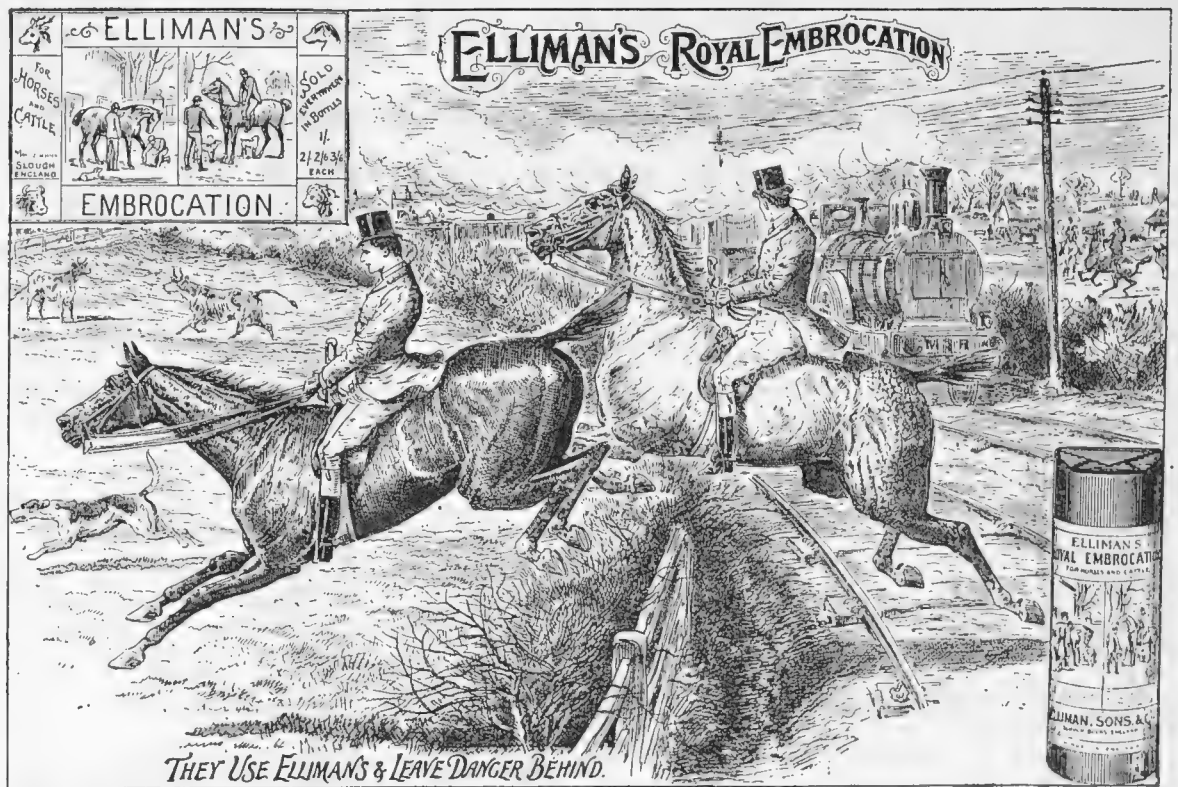
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March 25 1895.

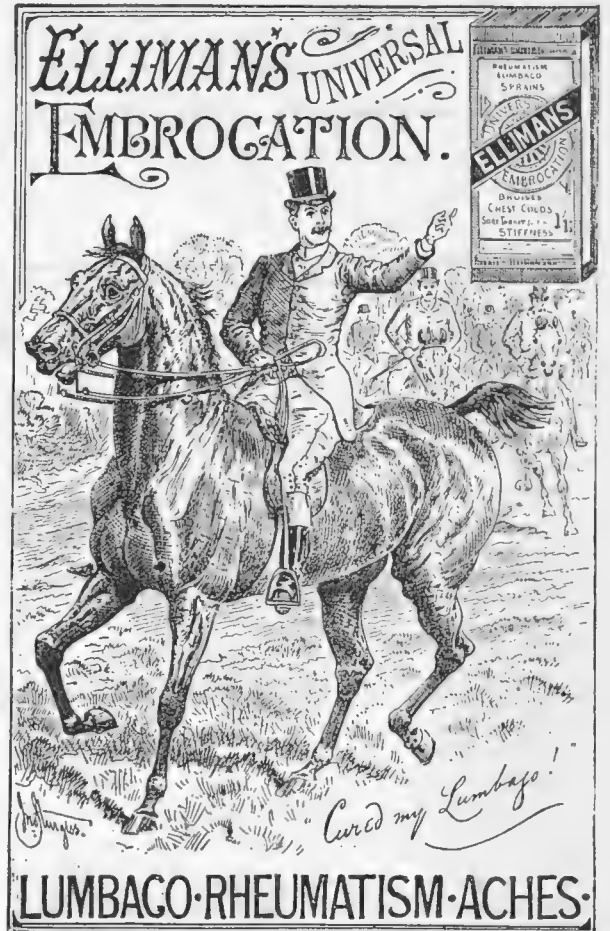
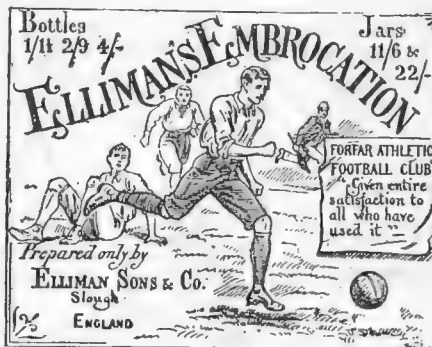
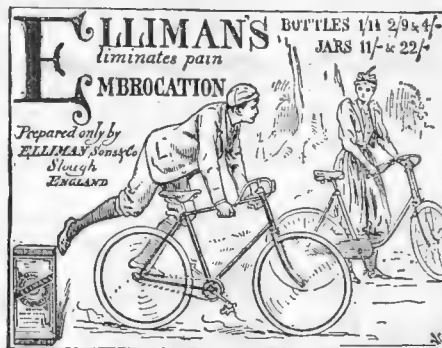
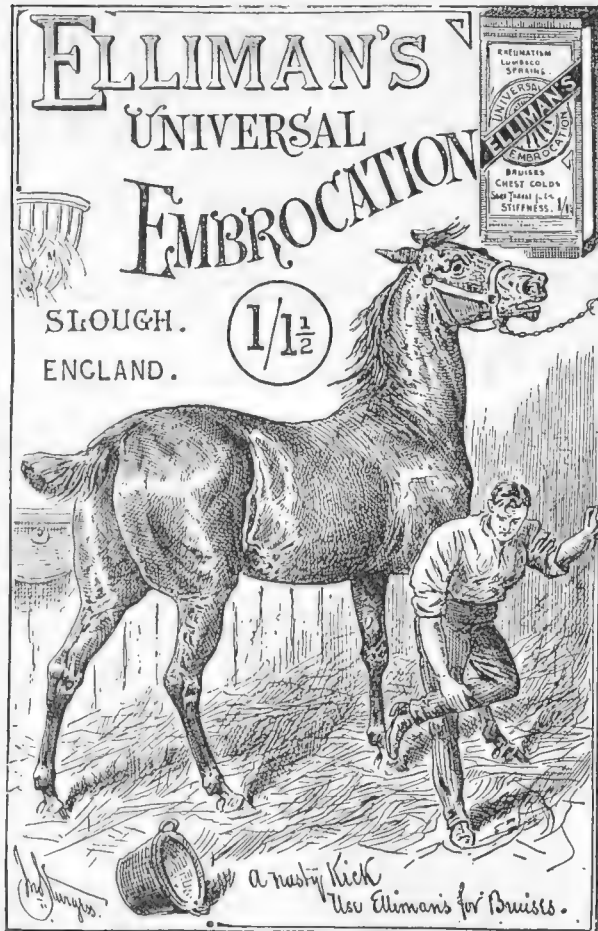
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ELLIMAN'S FOR STIFFNESS.

## THE WORLD OF SPORT.

## FOOTBALL.

The enormous amount of football which has been got through since my last chronicles I do not propose to directly touch upon. A great deal is invariably accomplished at Christmas-time, not in quantity merely, but in importance also. Apart from the variability of form at a season essentially mixed, many of the most interesting League matches are arranged for the last days of the old year, and it need hardly be said that the results of them affect the championship to a considerable extent. A state of puzzlement which might have been existing gives place, by the time January comes round, to a strong impression as to the destination of honours.

In the First Division the issue is still, to say the least, problematical. At different times, about half the actual number of competitors have been separately named as the probable winners. First it was the Bolton Wanderers who earned the peculiar honour. Then the Bolton Wanderers were abandoned, and the public plumped hard for Stoke. Stoke, however, flattered only to deceive. They could win their home matches right enough. Most teams can do that. It was when they went away that their troubles began. One could write an admirable sermon on the strange metamorphosis which comes over a team when it visits a foreign ground.

The present favourites for the championship of the First Division are Derby County, Aston Villa, and Everton. Of these, Everton is, at the present time, undoubtedly showing the best all-round form. Indeed, their performances savour of the good old days of Preston North End, who were wont to scatter all opposition to the four winds. Everton's early losses, however, have to be made up, and this can only be accomplished in a negative way—that is to say, Aston Villa and Derby County will have to retrograde. Derby County and Aston Villa, however, evince no consuming desire to oblige. Away from home, there is nothing in their records to make their supporters smile the smug smile of content; but at home they can win—in fact, the Derby County ground is a sort of cemetery for the hopes of visiting teams.

Burton Wanderers and Manchester City are still the lions of the Second Division, with Liverpool prowling angrily behind them. Liverpool in this division are the prototype of Everton in the other, but with this difference: that there is no team among the whole thirty-two with so pronounced an ability to win away from home as have the Burton Wanderers. The strange part about it is that the Wanderers have hardly a single player who can be called famous. People know, in a dim sort of way, that there is a place called Burton, they realise also that there is a team there called the Wanderers; but ask them to name a single player, and they will tell you they have a friend to meet round the corner.

The great Rugby battle—the first of the season's International matches—comes up for decision on Saturday next. The venue is the famous Rectory Field at Blackheath, the home of London's premier fifteen. I don't know why, but England v. Wales is a match that directly appeals to Englishmen. The Scotland match is, of course, of more importance; but, then, Scotland has a nasty, irritating habit of beating England, whereas Wales, who were wont to be easy victims for the Rose, are now opponents worthy of our steel. In fact, not until 1890 did the Leek have the temerity to register a victory, the margin then being a bare try to nil. England won the next two matches with fair ease, but Wales again popped up in 1893 with that memorable triumph at Cardiff by 2 goals and 2 tries to 1 goal and 3 tries—which only shows you how useful it is to have a man in the team with a knowledge of cross-bar geography. Both in '94 and '95, however, England asserted her supremacy, and, if we are to believe all the prophets, they are going to assert some more this time.

As the result of the North and South engagement, the Southerners are but poorly represented against Wales. Last year it was a purely Southern fifteen which scored one goal and three tries against the Leek. But then, of course, it was that same Southern fifteen which had so mercilessly tied knots in the Northerners. I must confess that I do not share the confidence of the majority of pressmen in England. We may win, it is likely enough; but that the result is prepressed I take leave to doubt.

Critics—and thoughtful critics too—will tell you that England must win, because they are going to push Wales all over the field in the scrums. If England do show superiority in the forwards, the result certainly ought to be easy of prognostication, because it has been proven time and again that forwards have the result in their hands. But Wales can teach England a great deal yet of the art of Rugby football. Of the robust part of the game, so to speak, we know sufficient: at finesse and at the subtler points we are miles behind the Principality. The four three-quarters' system in England is in its infancy. Welshmen pass with the science that characterises professional foot-passing under the Association code.

The England team has not given complete satisfaction. I consider the selection of S. Houghton, of Cheshire, as full-back, instead of J. F. Byrne, the experienced international, a mistake—not a great one on paper, but likely to prove so on the field. Business compels the withdrawal of W. B. Thomson, of Blackheath, and so the three-quarter line will consist of three Northerners and one Southerner, which is not so bad under the circumstances. The veteran Valentine did remarkable things for the North against the South. He may repeat his triumph against Wales, but it is a matter of doubt, because Valentine has before

now failed in representative matches. There is a great proportion of Yorkshiremen among the scrummagers. Indeed, Bromet, though identified with the South, is, of course, also a Tyke pure and simple. I have most dread of our halves. The mixing of Taylor and Cattell—the one a Northerner and the other a Southerner—is a dangerous policy. Each is a splendid player, and, as a matter of fact, they have been partners before; but still the splitting of the combination of Cattell and Maturin, who have done so much for Blackheath, has provoked comment.

The Welsh fifteen is remarkably different from those we have been accustomed to. As is only natural after the brilliant series of victories of that club, Llanelly supplies a fair proportion of the team. They are best represented at back, though, of course, Arthur Gould, of Newport, who must have been born with an International cap on his head, again figures among the three-quarters. In physique the forwards do not compare with the English eight; but they are tricky, and up to every move on the board. In short, I do not think the result, whatever it is, should surprise anybody. England's team is a combination of great names; but great names do not win matches. Seasoned critics would have preferred a little more assimilation of styles, but there are some men who cannot be left out of a team. There is likely to be a tremendous crowd next Saturday, and a hearty recognition of any ability displayed by the Welshmen.

## GOLF.

If golf does not seem to obtain in popularity in England—who, indeed, can expect it of a game which does not appeal to the masses?—it is flourishing as lively as ever in Scotland. A new club has just been formed at Clonakilty, with a committee consisting of Messrs. Macarthy, O'Kelly, Wright, and Canty, the secretary being Mr. J. Macnamara. A links of nine holes has been obtained very close to the town.

The Marquis of Lothian has just been sounded on the idea of making a golf course, for the use of the inhabitants of the Dalkeith district, at Newbattle, which ground belongs to him. He has expressed himself in favour of the scheme, and a public meeting has been arranged; at which to complete all the details. The ground is in close proximity to the Dalhousie railway station.

The meetings to be held during the ensuing week are as follow:

- Jan. 1—Cheadle Club: New Year's Competition.
- 1—Trafford Golf Club: New Year Prizes.
- 1—North Manchester Club: Captain's Cup.
- 4—West Middlesex Golf Club: Bogey Competition.
- 4—Redhill and Reigate Golf Club: Turner Medal.
- 4—Finchley Golf Club: Monthly Medal and Captain's Prize.
- 4—North Manchester Club: Bogey Competition.

In the "J.R.D." golf scoring-book, Messrs. John Robertson and Son, of Dundee, have called "Cynicus" to their aid and turned out a useful companion to the golfer.

## CRICKET.

My "Wisden's" has come to hand; the same old "Wisden's," except for an increase in bulk—a natural filling-out, as it were. Indeed, the extent of its information is astonishing. "Wisden's" may not be a book invested with the power of compelling one to sit down by the fire-side and pore over its contents line by line. It almost has that effect on me; I admit, but then I flatter myself that there are few people more enthusiastic on the summer game than myself.

The neatness in compilation which always characterises "Wisden's" is observable in the present—the thirty-third—issue. Every match of any importance is dealt with; those matches of particular interest naturally receiving more attention than the others. One might have thought that the wider spread of the game last season, consequent on the extension of the County Championship, could not have been satisfactorily coped with, but Mr. Sydney Pardon and his able helpers have set about the task with commendable care, and the result is a work which, in its class, is unequalled the wide world over. There are more than four hundred pages, and, at present, I have not discovered a single mistake! Anybody with a shilling in his pocket should replace it with the latest edition of "Wisden." As a book of reference it is invaluable.

## ATHLETICS AND CYCLING.

The South London Harriers and the Hampton Court Hare and Hounds hold an inter-club run at South Croydon on Saturday next.

The Oxford University Hare and Hounds will meet the United Hospitals Hare and Hounds on Feb. 8 next.

I hear that George Hunt, who has just arrived at Bordeaux, meditates an attempt on the one hour and 100 kilometres world's record.

Messrs. Singer and Co. have been invited to send three Model de Luxe tricycles to Marlborough House for inspection by the Princess of Wales. The Prince has also ordered a "trike" from Messrs. Humber. Invitations have just been issued, by the way, for the Humber Cycling Club ball on Monday week next.

Following on the information that Sir William Harecourt and the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour have gone in for cycling, I hear that the Tory member for the Wimbledon Division of Surrey has generously guaranteed the sum of £50 to the new Wimbledon Cycling Club. It is proposed to form a social club, at a probable cost of £1400, and in such a district I should think it would be very successful. There are many golfers in Wimbledon, and it would not be a bad idea if they amalgamated.



## TWO NEW MAGAZINES.

The proprietors of the older illustrated magazines will have to look to their laurels. The last few months have seen an enormously increased competition in that direction. The splendid success of the *Strand Magazine* has brought other rivals into the field. The *Windsor Magazine* so far has proved the most notable of these. It has held the field very



SPRING IN THE STRAND.—A. BIRKENRUTH.  
From the "Minster" for January.

brilliantly for a year, and no one can doubt but that, under Mr. David Williamson's capable editorship, the *Windsor* has come to stay. Now I have before me two fresh claimants for the sixpences of a public with whom that particular coin appears to be so abundant.

*Pearson's Magazine* is issued by Mr. Arthur Pearson of *Pearson's Weekly*, who was interviewed in *The Sketch* the other day. Mr. Pearson is making an interesting experiment, which one can scarcely doubt will meet with the success it deserves. Here are combined some of the very highly artistic features of the American magazines with a literature which caters for that wider public which knows not art in any very high degree. Take, for example, the beautiful drawings by Mr. Caton Woodville to illustrate Mr. Archibald Forbes' article, "The Bravest Deed I Ever Saw." This article, by the way, on "How Lord William Beresford Won the V. C.," recalls to my mind a similar article by

Mr. Forbes entitled "Bill Beresford and his Victoria Cross," which appeared in the *English Illustrated Magazine* for August 1889. Mr. Pearson will doubtless be interested if I copy for him the concluding lines of an essay which contains many similar patches wherein Mr. Pearson has infringed the copyright of the proprietors of the *English Illustrated Magazine*. To Mr. Forbes, of course, nothing can be said, as an author can scarcely be charged with plagiarism for quoting from himself—

*English Illustrated Magazine*, Aug. 1889.

Queen Victoria can appreciate not less than soldierly valour soldierly honesty, generosity, and modesty; and so it came about that the next *Gazette* after Lord William Beresford's visit to Windsor contained the announcement that the proudest reward a soldier of our Empire can aspire to had been conferred on Sergeant Edmund O'Toole, of Baker's Horse.

*Pearson's Magazine*, Jan. 1896.

Not less than soldierly valour can Queen Victoria appreciate soldierly honesty, generosity, and modesty; and so the next *Gazette* announced that the proudest reward a British soldier can aspire to had been conferred on Sergeant Edmund O'Toole, of Baker's Horse.

However, this is a very small matter compared with the general contents of this number of *Pearson's Magazine*. There are, for example, admirable stories by Mr. Anthony Hope and Mr. Robert Barr, and who among us can write better stories than they? There is a description of Lord Aberdeen at Ottawa, which will assist Mr. Pearson in his attempt to cater for "Greater Britain," and there is a wholesome variety of other materials of popular interest.

The second magazine before me, the *Minster*, might have been considered an old friend were it not that it contains a preliminary announcement to the effect that nothing remains of the old *Minster* but the name, and that the publication starts under new editorship and from new offices. It is now the property of the Artistic Publishing Company, of Amberley House, Norfolk Street. Here, also, there is a plenitude of good ideas and good pictures—a selection of opinions upon the future of the British Empire, for example, in which Sir Augustus Harris may be found side by side with Madame Sarah Grand, and Mr. William O'Brien with Mr. Sidney Low of the *St. James's Gazette*. What could be more picturesquely journalistic and popular? There are good stories too, and I find John Strange Winter, Eden Phillpotts, and W. L. Alden among the contributors in this department. I like the notion, also, of the cross-examinations of distinguished personages, Mr. Augustine Birrell being the "victim" on the present occasion; and, lastly, I may note a very pretty poem by Mr. Zangwill, entitled "Spring in the Strand," illustrated by that charming artist, Mr. Birkenruth, with the illustration which I give herewith. The whole number makes a capital sixpence-worth of pictures and stories, and I wish the new editor every success in his venture.

## OLD-WORLD TALES.\*

In this volume Mrs. Leighton continues the series which began with the puppet-play of "Dr. Faustus" and "The Wonderful History of Virgilius the Sorcerer." The youngsters for whom legends of the character comprised in these and the present issues are intended must be of "larger growth" than those to whom Mr. Jacobs's collection of folk-tales, also published by Mr. Nutt, have appealed so successfully. The heroes and heroines of mediæval times move heavily, even the fairy Melusina losing the airy grace which bewitches us in the Greek and other variants of the world-wide tale. Once more, however, we are drawn to the story of her wooing by the knight Raymond, and her consent to wed him on the condition that every Saturday he shall suffer her to depart, and neither seek nor ask whither she has gone. But, one day, Raymond's brother persuades him to break his oath, and, following Melusina, he looks through the door of her secret chamber, sees her in her bath, and discovers that the lower part of her body is serpent-like. Of this broken vow she knows, but keeps her own counsel until a day when, angered at the conduct of one of his sons, Raymond hotly reproaches her as "dragon-mother of a serpent-brood." Melusina forgives him, but tells him that their fate is sealed, and then, suddenly transformed into a flying dragon, departs through the castle window. And when she reappears near Lusignan, the old home, it is only, like the Irish banshee, to give warning of death. Doubtless in the kernel of the story, which is found in India, Wales, and in the Far West among Ojibways and Blackfoots—is, in short, a far-travelled tale—we have the widespread barbaric custom which, at certain times, forbids men to look on women. But we must leave students of such matters to settle this. Next in order in Mrs. Leighton's collection is a life of Æsop, embodying the stories about that famous fabulist which Phædrus and the monk Planudes have preserved. Among these examples of his acuteness is that which tells how, starting on a journey with his fellow-slaves, he was given choice of what he would carry. To their surprise, he lifted the heaviest burden, a pannier of bread, whereupon they voted him a fool. But when meal-time came his pannier was quickly lightened, and when the next supply was handed round he had only the empty basket to carry for the rest of the journey! Of the story of the Seven Suabians, a vigorous, swinging, rhymed version is given; and to this succeeds the "sweet and touching tale of Fleur and Blanche-Fleur," whose true love was so rewarded that "they lived on to their hundredth year."

\* "Mediæval Legends. Being a Gift-Book to the Children of England of Old-World Tales from France and Germany." By Mrs. Leighton. London: David Nutt.

# TO THE CONTINENT.

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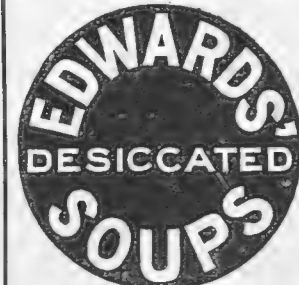
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## OUR LADIES' PAGES.

## DRESSES AT THE SHAFTESBURY.

I venture to affirm that the cloak whose glories Mrs. Tree—as the heroine of the new Shaftesbury piece, “A Woman’s Reason”—displays to such advantage will be the cynosure of all feminine eyes, and cause green-eyed jealousy to invade the theatre during the entire progress of the second act; and, therefore, as it is bound to become a celebrity, I have secured its portrait for you, and now must give you the particulars of the interview during which I obtained details of its most fascinating personality.

It is fashioned, you must know, of green velvet, patterned with a design of rosy-hued pomegranates and their attendant leaves, a shower of gold paillettes glittering between, and, for lining, satin in a brilliant shade of cerise. It has a little sable collar, fastened together with diamond clasps; and then the loosely hanging fronts are bordered with a band of ermine, beneath which peeps out an edging of sable, the quaintly cut cape-sleeves being finished off in the same way. At the back there is a quaint little hood, which shows a brilliant gleam of satin, and, just above the waist, the fulness is caught in with two diamond-and-steel clasps.

Add to this a sable toque with two black quills rising high from the left side, and a clinging gown of tender sage-green cloth, wrought with gold about the hem, and with a touch of old lace at throat and wrists, and then this particular portrait is complete.

The original is altogether charming, I can assure you.

After this you have an all-too-short glimpse of a dinner-gown of pale-pink mirror moiré, with floating scarves of chiffon, and, over all, the shimmer of gold sequins; and then, as sometimes it is good for the first to be last, we will go back to the first act, where the “Hon. Nina Keith” makes her entry in all the glory of her Drawing-Room dress.

And “glory” is the only fitting word to describe it, for it is all of cloth-of-silver—shimmering, wonderful—the skirt veiled with exquisite, mellow-tinted lace, the soft fulness caught together on the hips with little festoons of diamonds, but the bodice (with its berthe and sleeves of lace) and the full Court train from the shoulders having their glory



MISS FLORENCE WEST IN ACT I. OF “A WOMAN’S REASON.”

undimmed by any covering. The train is lined with vivid apple-green moiré, which gives gleams of colour through the shining silver; and then there are roses galore—delicate pink blossoms, with trails of leaves—to border the whole of the train and the foot of the skirt. It is a wonderfully beautiful dress, and it suits Mrs. Tree well; and yet, so does the last

gown of all—a simple, straightly hanging robe of powder-blue cloth, with just a pointed collar and cuffs of embroidered lawn to relieve its absolute simplicity.

Miss Florence West’s first-act dress is an equally perfect representation of an entirely different type of fashion, so kindly turn to its likeness, and study its various good points. The skirt, of soft ivory-white cloth, being



MRS. TREE IN ACT II. OF “A WOMAN’S REASON.”

strong in the consciousness of its perfectly hanging folds, is quite content that all the ornamentation should be concentrated on the bodice, which is a very elaborate affair indeed. There is first a quaint little zouave of geranium-pink velvet, patterned faintly with trails of flowers, and with a bold raised design in white, this zouave—which is made with half-sleeves, smoothly following the outline of the shoulders—being fastened across the soft fulness of a white chiffon under-bodice by a band of green velvet, with a diamond button flashing at either end. There is green velvet, too, at the neck and the waist, and the sleeves proper are simply great, soft puffings of chiffon, terminating at the elbow, and almost covered by a deep frill of yellowish lace.

Crowning “Miss Da Costa’s” fashionably reddish hair there is a particularly *chic* hat, with a brim of green felt and a crown of violet velvet, round which has sprung up a miniature forest of violet-leaves, the dainty flowers themselves being also present in profusion, together with a gracefully curving cluster of coque feathers.

I commend both dress and hat to the imitative notice of all lovers of smartness.

After this there is a simple home gown of golden-brown shot silk, opening over a frill front of pale rose-pink silk, and bordered with a frayed-out ruche of pink, green, and brown silk. And then you have pretty Miss Maude Millett, first in a coat and skirt costume of biscuit-coloured box-cloth, the coat lined with peach-coloured silk, and showing a vest of white silk and lace, and, next, in pale-grey corduroy, with an effective touch of turquoise-blue introduced in the shape of a silk vest.

And here endeth the tale of the Shaftesbury dresses. I think you will allow that it is a fascinating one; but for the present you must put it out of your minds, in order to pay the proper amount of attention to two very important new publications just issued by that popular author of “Everything for Ladies’ Wear,” Mr. Peter Robinson by name, whose palatial residences at 256 to 264, Regent Street, and also in Oxford Street, are well known to all of you.

These, his latest publications, are devoted to the tales of the really wonderful designs which make the firm’s winter sale an object of enthralling interest to the world of women in general. I will just peep into the pages and cut one or two leaves, in order to tell you that, at



Regent Street, there are, for instance, some perfectly cut black satin skirts (for two and a-half guineas only!), which will do good service both for day and evening wear, and lend their aid to any and every bodice, while for five and a-half guineas you can become the proud possessor of a chiné taffeta silk skirt, with sufficient material for the fashioning of a bodice; and I would whisper to you confidentially that there are a few, and a few only, black serge tailor-made coat and skirt costumes, which, because they do not boast of the very latest shape in skirts, are reduced to the nominal price of a guinea. I could go on to tell you of exceedingly handsome model tea-gowns, which are reduced to three and a-half and five and a-half guineas, and pretty morning-gowns in cashmere and crêpon from 18s. 6d.; but is not all this, and much more, disclosed to you in full in that sale catalogue which can be yours for the asking?

Only let me advise you to ask for it by the very next post, for this week should not come to an end until you have arranged that some of Mr. Peter Robinson's bargains have changed owners.

Also, there is the Oxford Street house, with—notable among hundreds of other good things—some smart cloth coats, fur-trimmed, at from one to four guineas; new cloth capes at 12s. 9d. (!); costume-skirts in silk, satin, or brocade at two guineas; and wool crêpon tea-gowns at 33s. 9d. instead of 52s. 6d.

Also, who could possibly resist an array of smart millinery priced at 8s. 11d., 16s. 11d., and 19s. 11d., I wonder? Or a blouse, by name the "Inez," in Lyons finished striped velvet, in black and white, or black and colours, the sale price being 23s. 9d.? Not I, for one, for this blouse has caused the final and decisive rise in the temperature, and I am now added to the lengthy list of willing victims to the prevailing epidemic—the sale fever.

#### ENGLISH FURNITURE FOR JAPAN.

For the time being, Japan has taken upon itself a new and unique position of interest in my eyes—an interest which no wars or rumours of wars could ever give to it, for I have been peeping at the household gods which, in the fulness of time, will help to build up in that country which has always something of Fairyland about it, a veritable House Beautiful, and, moreover, a thoroughly English home. For even far-away Japan has been reached by the fame of our own great house of Howard and Sons, of Berners Street, and so a Japanese merchant has entrusted them with the entire furnishing of his palatial mansion, a fact which should make us all feel a reflected glory, especially as the compliment has been increased by the very papers themselves being chosen from Messrs. Howard, and this, too, by a native of the country noted all the world over for its wall-papers.

I have my own theory on the subject, and I am open to affirm that it is for the edification of an English bride that this English home is being prepared; that there is to be a boudoir, with the walls covered by delicate pink paper patterned with ribbon-scrolls and trails of flowers, and furnished in Sheraton style with satinwood cabinets and writing-tables, some of the brocades which cover the luxurious settees and chairs being positively exquisite. Imagine, for instance, a pale-pink ground,

for, according to Japanese etiquette, the host and hostess must not indulge in seats which are in any way superior to those of their guests; and the sideboard is such a marvellous piece of work that I despaired of giving you any adequate idea of its beauty, and so present you with a sketch both of it and of one of those twenty-four chairs.

There are three drawing-rooms, you must know, the scheme of colouring embracing cream, pink, and green—one wall-paper, for instance, having baskets of flowers and festoons of blossoms on a pale-pink ground; while, of the many brocades and Genoese velvets, one has a raised design of cream-and-pink flowers, in which a touch of blue is introduced on a tender-green ground; another, lovely enough to raise up envious thoughts of a fashionable evening-dress, being narrowly striped with white on pink, interspersed with chiné bouquets of softly coloured flowers.



DRAWING-ROOM CABINET.

Everything, in fact, goes to the completion of an absolutely perfect whole, which is both beautiful and restful to the eye, with the dark rosewood of the cabinets and overmantels as a background, and the occasional shimmer and gleam of a gold-framed screen. The cabinets, indeed, are particularly lovely, and absolutely unique in design—as witness our second sketch.

There is a library, too, with a wall-paper in a raised design in cream on an orange-coloured ground, through which there runs a glint of gold; a carpet of deep, rich brown; and mahogany chairs upholstered in leather. Evidently our Japanese friend intends to be provided with a store of books, for one of the elaborately carved book-cases is actually eleven feet long, and writing-desks with most luxurious fittings make correspondence a pleasure instead of a task.

The waiting-room and the gun-room are carried out in fumed oak, and the halls and corridors are to be provided with luxurious morocco-covered divans and beautifully carved chairs; while in the upstairs corridors leading to the bedrooms there are capacious wardrobes in solid ash, with elaborately carved panels.

In the principal bedroom a lovely shade of blue predominates, both in the paper and the carpet, the magnificent mahogany and satinwood furniture being in the Adams style. The wardrobe and the toilet-table are particularly fascinating, and the bed, itself of most modern make, is set down in the centre of four great mahogany pillars, which are fixed into the floor, and uphold a gracefully draped canopy.

The effect is superb, as you can imagine.

The guests' bedroom is in walnut, with pale-green draperies; and there is a third charming room—the bachelor's room—with simple ash furniture. Mosquito-nets are, of course, notable features in all the bedrooms.

It is wonderful, is it not, to think of all these English-made things journeying out to Japan? and the packing must in itself be a stupendous undertaking, and yet you will be interested to know that this same firm which is executing this regal order to such perfection will also supply our own modest homes with the most artistic and beautiful furniture, and that, too, at wonderfully moderate prices. I should like you to call and prove the truth of this statement by pricing some of their goods, and, indeed, it is a positive lesson in the art of furnishing to perfection to walk through that storehouse of treasures at 25 to 27, Berners Street.

And, in the meantime, I am consumed with curiosity about the bride who is to enjoy all the delights of English surroundings in her far-away home in Japan.

Most of these goods are still on view at Messrs. Howard's, who take pleasure in showing them to anyone who calls, and they are well worth a visit.

FLORENCE.



SIDEBOARD AND CHAIR.

striped with a lace-like design in white, interspersed with clusters of roses, caught here and there with true-lovers' knots, another, still in pink, being narrowly striped with white and showered with tiny pink flowers. The carpet, too, is in a deep, soft shade of pink—in fact, pink is the predominating tone in the room, though the tender colourings of the brocades make a perfectly harmonising variety. After this daintily feminine loveliness, come, for the sake of contrast, to the imposingly grand dining-room, with its deep Indian-red carpet, against which the fumed oak of the furniture stands out with such wonderful effect. The great oak dining-table is provided with twenty-four chairs, all alike, please note,

#### NOTE.

*The Sketch* will be on sale in the UNITED STATES at the "Illustrated London News" Offices, World Building, New York; and in AUSTRALASIA, by Messrs. Gordon and Gotch, at Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Perth.

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CONTENTS FOR JANUARY 1896.

ILLUSTRATION TO "A BOATING PARTY OF TWO." Frontispiece.

A BOATING PARTY OF TWO. By LOUIS BECKE. Illustrations by Lancelot Speed.

SOME MEMORABLE SHIPWRECKS. By W. GORDON SMYTHIES. With Illustrations.

THE SHRINE OF ST. ANTHONY. By ARTHUR MACARTHUR. Illustrations by Dudley Hardy.

A THIRD-RATE PAINTER. By GRANT ALLEN. With Illustration.

THE INEVITABLE THING. By EDWARD PUGH. Illustrations by Dudley Hardy.

AH ME! MY WONTED JOYS FORSAKE ME. Illustration by Robert Sauber.

TALES OF A WAYSIDE INN. Illustrations by Herbert Railton.

A FAMILY OF STATESMEN: THE HOUSE OF CECIL. By J. M. BULLOCH. With Illustrations from Photographs.

A GREY SLEEVE. By STEPHEN CRANE. Illustrations by Arthur J. Goodman.

A SUPERSTITION OF THE MONTH OF JANUARY. Illustration by Gilbert James.

THE NEW HOUSE IN POMPEI. By H. P. FITZGERALD MARRIOTT. With Illustrations.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE. By BERNINI.

FROM THE POST-BAG. By Mrs. HENRY MANSENGH. Illustrations by Adolph Birkenruth.

AS THE SPARKS FLY UPWARD. By POLLY BRUCE. Illustrations by J. Walter Wilson.

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ON

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*Price ONE SHILLING.*



## Help Always Near By.

"Oh, I shall be all right in the morning." How often we say so! And sometimes we are; sometimes not. We trust to sleep, to the dose we took at bedtime, to the chapter of accidents. When things go wrong we fancy that somehow or other time and change will set them right.

Here's a pathetic bit. It has a sigh and a tear in it. Yes, and the fag ends of fading rainbows. "*As time went on,*" says a tired and weary woman, "*I got weaker and weaker, and more and more downhearted.*"

No doubt, no doubt. Alas! for us all there is nothing in the mere going on of time to make us stronger or happier. Still, there is another side to this matter. Time gives good things a chance to happen as well as bad. Seas have washed sailors off their ships, and seas have washed them on again.

"In March 1890," this same woman tells us, "I had an attack of congestion of the lungs, and when it passed away it left me in a low, languid condition. I didn't get my strength back. Often while going about the house I felt as if I should sink down and faint, then and there. I didn't seem to want anything to eat; I had no real appetite. I did eat, of course, but things didn't taste good. And after every meal (hardly to be called a meal for the little I took) I had a

strange pain in the chest and side, and between the shoulders.

"But what frightened me was a pain in the left side, around the heart. The doctor said it was pleurisy, and I was afraid my heart was weak. I got very little sleep, and what I did get was disturbed and unrefreshing. Frequently I would start from my sleep in great fear and excitement, although there was never any outward reason for it.

"By-and-by my health was so completely broken down that I could scarcely get through my ordinary housework. In the midst of it I often had to lie down on the couch to rest. As time went on I got weaker and weaker and more and more downhearted.

"In July I went to Norfolk, in hope that the air of my native place might restore me; but I did not gain much by the change. I had now been under a doctor four months, and taken physic until I was tired of it. Still I had not improved in the least.

"Whilst away in Norfolk I heard how my uncle had been benefited by Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, and I said to myself, 'Why shouldn't it do me good too?' Upon my return to London I procured a bottle from Mr. Taylor's Drug Stores, in High Street, Stoke Newington. After I had taken that one bottle I felt quite a different person.

"All the pain in the side left me; I could eat and enjoy my food, and everything agreed with me. I got stronger and stronger, and by the

time I had finished a second bottle I was completely cured.

"Since that time—now three years ago—I have kept in the best of health. I write you this letter thinking that you may publish it, and so others may come to know what to do when they are ill as I was. I will gladly answer any who write to me. Yours truly, (Signed) Mrs. Emma Harvey, 5a, Sharboro' Street, The Crescent, Stamford Hill, London, April 27, 1894."

Thus we see (and a pleasure it is to see it) that Mrs. Harvey did get well and strong again in spite of all her doubts and fears. Yet it was not time, change, luck, nor even the fresh air of Norfolk that cured her. It was Mother Seigel's Syrup—just that, and nothing else. And she might as well have been cured in April as in August, if only she had used the Syrup then. But, as fortune would have it, she didn't hear of the Syrup until she went to Norfolk in July.

That was all the more strange, inasmuch as the newspapers, aided by the tongues of everybody who ever used it, are doing their best to make the name of Mother Seigel's Syrup as familiar to people's ears as the names their mothers called them by. Well, it will be so presently, and then no sufferer will look around hopelessly for help in ignorance that *help is close at his elbow*.

Mrs. Harvey's ailment was our universal enemy, acute indigestion and dyspepsia, which always surrenders when confronted with a bottle of Mother Seigel's Syrup.

## Telegram from Russia.

*Send to Anitchhoff Palace St  
Petersburg immediately one dozen  
Mariani Wine for H I M  
Empress of Russia*

A subsequent letter ordering a further supply of 50 bottles Mariani Wine states that H.I.M. the Dowager Empress of Russia has derived the greatest benefit from its use.

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## CITY NOTES.

*The Next Settlement begins on Jan. 13.*

## CLEVELAND'S FOLLY.

President Cleveland has certainly put the fat in the fire this time, and has kindled a much bigger blaze than he could ever have intended. When he sent his first Message to Congress about the Venezuelan Question, and hinted so airily at a war with Great Britain over the Central American squabble, he was simply bidding for re-election to the Presidential Chair. He never really meant war, and he knew perfectly well that Great Britain would not take him seriously. Nor did this country get belligerent about his threats; but it did what was still more effective, it sold every American security it could get off its hands. The panic that resulted taught the Yankees a lesson better than could have been enforced by half-a-dozen despatches from Lord Salisbury.

The President was a demi-god for a day, as the American race were pleased to distraction by his spread-eagle attitude in regard to the Monroe Doctrine; but, the moment the Market went to ruin, he was suddenly transformed into perhaps the most unpopular man in the States. He shot his bolt, and it rebounded on himself. His action has precipitated such a serious financial crisis in his country that it is impossible to see the end of it, and the last year of his Presidency will see commercial disaster in every quarter. Never has Great Britain won such a striking victory even by the use of all her armaments. Without so much as lifting a finger publicly, this country, through the action of its private citizens, has brought the United States to its knees.

That President Cleveland could have pursued such a suicidal policy seems incredible, for hitherto he had played the part of a sound statesman, and the juncture was one at which especial skill was required. The country was on the brink of an abyss, and it lay with him to guide it deftly to a place of safety; but, instead, he has pushed it over. The United States had found itself quite unable to retain its stock of gold, and what was required from the President was a comprehensive scheme of currency reform to remove this danger. At present, the imports of the United States are greater than the exports, and, therefore, this trade balance against the country has to be met in gold. Besides this, the greenbacks and Treasury notes are being used to take gold out of the Treasury as soon as it is put in, and, as they are not cancelled, but reissued, there is no end to the drain of bullion. It goes on all the faster because there is grave danger of the United States relapsing to a silver basis, and, therefore, there is a general inclination in the commercial world to secure all the gold possible and hoard it.

Thrice within the past twelve months has the Treasury been filled with gold by means of bond issues, but to what purpose? The first and second loans were issued in the States, and, although the bankers there took the bonds and gave gold in exchange, they immediately withdrew it again by means of the Treasury notes. The third time half the bonds were sold to Europe, and the syndicate that took them agreed to keep exchange down, so that the gold supplied should not be withdrawn for so many months. But the moment the bargain expired, back all the bonds went, and the gold was taken from the Treasury again faster than it had been put in. For the third time the reserve is down to a dangerously low level, and something must be done to replenish it. This is the moment that Mr. Cleveland has selected for flying in the face of England!

Another huge issue of bonds is necessary, and who will take them except the Americans themselves, whose gold, as we have shown, is at once taken out again? The British public would have done so gladly had Cleveland only held his tongue; but now they will not touch the issue with a pair of tongs. It has been hinted that some of the bonds will actually be offered in London, but we cannot imagine who would possibly take them in view of the threats of war and the acknowledged critical condition of the United States. Instead of wishing to add to its holdings of American securities, the British public is selling out what it has, even up to the best class of Railway gold bonds; and to imagine it will take the "coin" bonds of the country that has drifted so near to a silver standard would be sheer folly. Not only will it be found impossible now to get gold here, but each day will see more shares and bonds sent back to America; and each security thrown back on the hands of the Americans makes the position out there worse, for it means that more gold must be shipped. Besides all this, the revival of trade will be checked by the proposed advance in the Tariff, and the railroad earnings will fall off. The American Market is in an absolutely hopeless position at present, and matters will go much worse before they are better.

## THE YANKEE PANIC.

Never has the American Market seen such a disastrous panic as that which followed on the war scare. Not only did the leading shares fall by ten dollars a-day, but the collapse extended to the bond department, in which investors rather than speculators are interested. Even the very best bonds became absolutely unsaleable, for the market was literally overwhelmed by orders to sell at any price, and the jobbers had simply to close their books and refuse to buy anything. To show what the market went to, we may quote a couple of instances relating to the very finest class of bonds. On Monday, Dec. 23, Louisville General Mortgage bonds were actually bought for 110; less than a week before they could not have been bought under 121. Again, Chesapeake and Ohio Fives were bought on the Monday for 101, while, a few days previously, they could not have been bought under 112. And the man who picked up those bargains was considered remarkably plucky, for so scared was the

market that a small line of 5000 dollars in Baltimore and Ohio Fives (a gilt-edged bond) could not be sold on the Monday at all.

The regular American bond market consists of three firms, perhaps the best-known being the Chinnerys, who are among the leading dealers in the House. These firms lost terrifically by the smash in bonds, it being estimated that the Chinnerys were losing at the rate of £10,000 a-day in depreciation of their holdings alone. We give a photograph of Mr. Walter Chinnery, one of the partners, who was a famous amateur runner in his day, and whose face will be familiar to many who used to attend the parades of the Four-in-Hand Club. The firm is an athletic one, for the other partner, Mr. Harry Chinnery, was a champion amateur boxer in his day.

## DEAD OR DORMANT?

The public has a proverbially fickle memory, and the recollection of the great Kaffir boom, which formed the leading financial event of last year, is already beginning to fade away. But those who still cherish a lively memory of profits or losses made or incurred during the merry summer days of 1895 are asking themselves

whether the Kaffir Circus is at all likely to revive any of its former glories in a reasonably near future. That many prices were inflated during the most perfervid period of the late boom is undoubted, and it is equally certain, now that we can look back upon the matter calmly and in the light of subsequent knowledge, that the "bull" account was very, very much overdone, and that a smash was a dead certainty. Well, the *débâcle* has come, and prices have fallen like autumn leaves. But there is no reason to be very disheartened on that account, nor to assume as proved that after the *débâcle* we are to be treated to the deluge.

As Shakspeare says, "reason thus" with the boom. Admit the inflation, the over-speculation, and all the rest of it. Grant, in short, that the pendulum had reached the furthest limit of its upward swing. Is there not also good reason to suppose that it has now fetched back again to the lowest level of the existing range of values, and that the next movement will be again upwards? If booms are generally overdone, so most assuredly are depressions. In several cases prices have now got back to the level at which they stood at this time last year, and, if there is anything at all in the talk about the intrinsic improvement in the South African gold industry, they certainly look cheap at the present figures.

There is also good reason for believing that the great Tom Tiddler's Ground on the Rand is still making strides forward, for the industry continues whether prices rise or fall. Take, for example, the output of gold from the Witwatersrand for the first eleven months of 1895. It amounts to 2,099,207 oz., or 75,000 oz. more than the total for the whole of the previous year, and no less than 600,000 oz. more than the total for 1893, while since 1890 the output has increased about fivefold. And, as yet, the deep-levels are hardly scratched. It would be absurd, too, to assume that the Geldenhuis Deep crushing, about which so much fuss was made, affords any reliable test of the value of these deep-levels, or that it is sufficient to controvert the opinions of the numerous able experts who have investigated these properties, and backed their opinions.

Perhaps the best idea of the comparative level of the prices ruling for mining shares at present will be obtained by taking the representative mines and comparing the highest quotations of 1895 with those obtaining at last week's Settlement. Here are a few of them, and the contrast affords some food for thought, *donne furieusement à penser*, as our French neighbours say—

	Highest Dec. 27, last Year. 1895.	Fall.		Highest Dec. 27, last Year. 1895.	Fall.	
Buffelsdoorn ... ..	9½	2½	6¾	Primrose ... ..	8½	6
Champ d'Or ... ..	5½	2½	2½	Spes Bona... ..	4½	1½
City and Suburban...	8	4½	3½	Van Ryn ... ..	11	5
Crown Reef ... ..	13	10	3	Nigel ... ..	8½	3½
Durban-Rodepoort	8½	7½	1½	Randfontein ...	4½	2½
Ferreira ... ..	21	16	5	Robinson ... ..	11½	8½
Glencairn ... ..	4½	3½	1½	Simmer and Jack	27½	20
Henry Nourse ... ..	8½	4½	3½	Barnato Consols	5½	2½
Jubilee ... ..	12½	8	4½	Chartered British	9	4½
Jumpers ... ..	8½	7½	1½	Johannesburg Consol.	6½	3½

The fall shown here is very heavy, no doubt, and it has been greatest, as might have been expected, in the more speculative stocks—that is to say, in those whose resources are chiefly in *futuro*, and have not, so far,





been proved absolutely. But even the steady-going dividend-payers, such as Ferreira and Primrose, have suffered severely, and here we obtain the most reliable indication as to how far present quotations are below intrinsic values. It is hardly too much to say that the whole of the stocks given in the above list look cheap at existing quotations—from a speculative point of view, that is to say—and people who can afford to take up shares and hold on to them for a few months would in all probability make a fair profit.

There are several reasons for supposing that renewed attention will be paid to Mines before long. The difficulty with the United States, although it will in all probability end pacifically, has, for the moment, quite killed the American Market, which at one time threatened to become a speculative rival to Mines. All hope of anything of that kind is now over for months—perhaps for years—to come. But, in these days of excessively cheap money, the public must have something to gamble with, and we shall be very much surprised if the Mining Market does not, before long, come into favour again.

Possibly the first section to be taken in hand will be that of West Australians. Several indications point in that direction, and it is well known that a considerable number of enterprises of this class are only waiting a favourable opportunity to be launched on the market. But there are also a number of Kaffir enterprises—the subsidiary Randfontein companies, for example—which are also ready to be brought out at the first promising opportunity, and in both instances there is no doubt efforts will soon be made to stimulate the respective markets. Even if West Australians are the first to “catch on,” their example will soon be followed by Kaffirs, and in that case we should see a considerable rise in prices.

Mind, we do not predict that the level reached during the late boom will again be attained. The gilt has worn off the gingerbread a little by this time, and the public are disposed to take a more sober view of the situation. But we may fairly look for a substantial recovery from present prices, more especially in the sound dividend-paying stocks. The shock given by the slump has been very severe, and investors must be given time to get over it, but, considering how greatly the active speculative markets have been narrowed down of late, there is a fair prospect of Mines again coming into favour before many months have elapsed.

The first “clean-up” in the trial crushing, at the Londonderry Battery, of stone from Burbank’s Birthday Gift Mine has realised exactly what we prognosticated—three ounces to the ton: 109 tons have been put through the battery so far for 330 ounces. If the rest of the 500 tons goes as well, the shareholders, we think, will be more than satisfied, and probably there will be a rise in the market price of the shares.

The account of the “Mount Margaret Reward Mine” in to-day’s *Illustrated London News* accounts for the extraordinary firmness of the shares, even in the midst of the worst of the panic over the Anglo-American crisis.

#### FOUR PER CENT. HARBOUR BONDS.

These are the kind of securities which seem popular at all times, and, as there is such a glut of money that Consols look like going to 109, we are glad to hear that there is a prospect of an early issue of £200,000 4 per cent. bonds under the Hastings Harbour Act 1890. We understand that they will be exceptionally well secured, and, if they are offered at anything under 105, we think they will be welcomed by trustees and other investors who want something “at home” that will yield nearly 4 per cent.

We beg to wish our numerous readers “A Prosperous and Happy New Year,” with “goot markets,” the toast which the “chentlemen” in “Sheep-farmers and Drovers” all drank with such enthusiasm.

#### FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

##### Correspondents must observe the following rules—

- (1) All letters must be addressed to the City Editor, *The Sketch* Office, 198, Strand, and must reach the Office not later than Friday in each week for answer in the following issue.
- (2) Correspondents must send their name and address as a guarantee of good faith, and adopt a nom-de-guerre under which the desired answer may be published. Should no nom-de-guerre be used, the answer will appear under the initials of the inquirer.
- (3) Every effort will be made to obtain the information necessary to answer the various questions; but the proprietors of this paper will not be responsible for the accuracy or correctness of the reply, or for the financial result to correspondents who act upon any answer which may be given to their inquiries.
- (4) Every effort will be made to reply to correspondence in the issue of the paper following its receipt, but in cases where inquiries have to be made the answer will appear as soon as the necessary information is obtained.
- (5) All correspondents must understand that if gratuitous answers and advice are desired the replies can only be given through our columns. If an answer by medium of a private letter is asked for, a postal order for five shillings must be enclosed, together with a stamped and directed envelope to carry the reply.
- (6) Letters involving matters of law, such as shareholders’ rights, or the possibility of recovering money invested in fraudulent or dishonest companies, should be accompanied by the fullest statement of the facts and copies of the documents necessary for forming an accurate opinion, and must contain a postal order for five shillings, to cover the charge for legal assistance in framing the answer.
- (7) No anonymous letters will receive attention, and we cannot allow the “Answers to Correspondents” to be made use of as an advertising medium. Questions involving elaborate investigations, disputed valuations, or intricate matters of account cannot be considered.

Unless correspondents observe these rules, their letters will receive no attention.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

UNCLE DICK.—(1) We think well of Menzies Reefs, but not so much of the other mine. As to whether they will ever see the prices you gave depends on the course of politics and the crushings from concerns like Hannan’s Brown Hill, Burbank’s, and the other mines which are expected to send results early in the year. (2) We think Wentworths, Brilliant Block, or Bonanzas would not hurt as a purchase. (3) Yes, we think well of them. (4) We should hold. The company is doing a sound if slow business.

S. J. W.—We said a good word for this company before the prospectus was issued, and on what we had been told in the market; but, of course, when on the issue the Wealth of Nations directors wrote their famous letter to the papers, the public did not subscribe, and we fear the directors went to allotment on too little capital. We believe you could get rescission of your contract to take shares upon the mistake in the prospectus; but you had better consult a smart company lawyer. We will send you the name of a good man if you will comply with Rule 5.

W. L.—The whole capital was underwritten, and we believe the railway will prove a very good business. The work will certainly be carried out, unless all connected with the concern are liars.

A. R. B.—We sent you the information you required on Dec. 17 last.

E. W.—We print our Correspondence Rules in the first Wednesday’s issue in each month. See Rule 5 this week. We cannot give names of brokers in the paper.

THE CREDIT INDEX COMPANY.—We have sent you the information you required, and hope you have got our letter.

MAX.—(1) We doubt it. (2) Ditto. (3) No.

F. D. H.—We sent you the information on Dec. 17. Add City of Wellington Waterworks bonds, Christchurch Drainage bonds, and, if you are not afraid of war with the United States, City of Quebec 6 per cent. 1908 or 1910 bonds to the list.

T. P.—We have written to your friend asking him to call on us, and we will put him in the way of finding a firm to undertake the business.

ATTLUCK.—The market knows nothing of the mine you name. Its office is 17 and 18, Basinghall Street, E.C. Write to the secretary and ask for information.

R. H. F.—We answered your inquiry on Dec. 19, and returned your papers.

JOHN.—If you can be taken in by the vulgar swindle you send us in the form of a tout’s circular, we can only say you must be very green indeed. Of course, it is a mere trap to catch fools. We think the firm you mention are—well, best left alone, and we urge you to get your money out of “their own investment” with as much despatch as possible, or you will never see a brass farthing of it. The moment you read this, rush off to an honest solicitor—if you can find such a *rara avis*—and make him write a letter to the wretched touts, demanding return of your cash. Unless you are sharp, it will be gone.

SNUFF-BOX.—Let us know if these people pester you with any more letters of the kind you sent us. We will expose them in our “Notes,” and you might threaten to set the Public Prosecutor on to them, which would probably put an end to the nuisance.

G. M. H.—We are told there was a little difficulty over the title, and no money, whether by way of discount or otherwise, could be paid out until it was cleared up. If you write to the secretary now, we understand you will get paid. The concern has great possibilities, and may turn out a second Chartered Company; but, of course, it is a gamble.

E. M. H.—If you are game to fight an action for rescission of your contract to take these wretched slate-quarry debentures, we think you would win. You are sure to lose your money if you sit still. If you like, we will send you, privately, the name of a solicitor who may be able to frighten the company into refunding you what you have paid. If it were our own case, we should fight, or, at least, “show fight.” We are afraid the mine is a bad egg. You can but hold on and hope. The price of Chartered depends very much on the course of politics, but we fancy you would make money by purchasing now.

J. M.—We wrote to you on Dec. 19. We cannot undertake to wire financial information to any correspondent.

AULD WILLIE.—You do not say whether you hold ordinary or preference shares in this company. We presume preference, and, if so, we should not sell. A friend of ours, from whom we inquired, writes: “I am much interested in this concern. The people connected with it were all friends of mine, and I look on the present managing director as a first-rate business man. The drawback of the company has been their joining a Lisbon firm, who appear to have been reckless in their purchases of corkwood, which gave rise to reports about ‘cash difficulties.’ There is practically only one firm in opposition in the trade. I shall hold my preference shares for better or for worse, and I see no reason to sell now, as I think the early summer months, when the demand for corks comes on, will test the advantages which they consider they possess.” Our informant is a reliable person, and holds a good stake in the company.

R. C. S.—We can find out very little about the concern you refer to, which is not in favour with the market here. Surely you can judge of its prospects on the spot far better than we can so far away, and we should rather have written to you for information than expected you to write to us. The share-capital is £200,000, and the debentures represent £100,000 ahead of this.

A. K. D.—We are precluded by our rules from answering anonymous correspondents. If you will repeat your inquiry in a letter, sending your name and address, we will answer it.

#### SCHOOLBOYS IN “H.M.S. PINAFORE.”

Gilbert and Sullivan are beloved by the amateur, but they probably are never done such absolute justice to by him as by the boys at the Grocers’ Company’s School. These schoolboy Savoyards have just produced with immense success the fifth of the G. and S. operas. This year they chose “H.M.S. Pinafore,” and a more charming performance by juvenile amateurs it could scarcely be possible to imagine. Remember, too, the difficulties with this particular opera. It is years since it was played in town, and probably the boys, none of whom were over fourteen, by the way, had never had the chance of seeing it. Yet the whole thing went admirably, with a spirit, with an evident enjoyment on the part of the young actors that is often so sadly lacking in a paid professional company. Sir Joseph Porter found in Master Rumbal a lad who has an innate idea of graceful stage deportment. In Master F. L. Mitchell we had a fine, easy-going Captain Corcoran, who might have come off a man-o-war. Master H. A. Knott (Ralph Rackstraw) sang excellently, while Master F. O. Harriss (Josephine) possesses a voice of great range, even though it shows signs of breaking. Master Dennis (Hebe) might have been born a woman, so admirable was his acting. But everybody was good, and the chorus was quite admirable, the whole thing being a great credit to Mr. Ernest Newton, who looked after the music, and to the headmaster (Rev. C. G. Gull), who coached the boys in the acting. Need it be said that the sisters and the cousins and the aunts of the young gentlemen were vastly delighted?